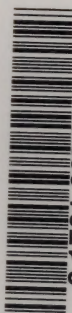


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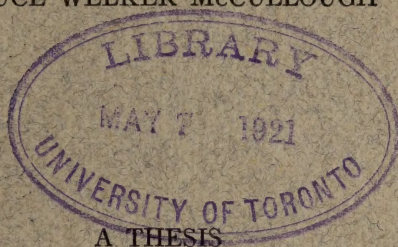


THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF RICHARD PENN SMITH

WITH A REPRINT OF HIS PLAY, "THE DEFORMED," 1830

BY

BRUCE WELKER McCULLOUGH



PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The Collegiate Press
GEORGE BANTA PUBLISHING COMPANY
MENASHA, WISCONSIN

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PREFACE

The following study was undertaken in the hope that it would contribute somewhat to the knowledge of our early drama, the significance of which, due in part to its inaccessibility, has not hitherto been fully appreciated by students of our native literature. The material herein dealt with is inaccessible to the general student, being confined largely to original manuscripts and to a few early editions now very scarce.

I take particular pleasure in expressing my gratitude to Professor Quinn, under whose general direction the work was done, for his helpful suggestions and friendly interest throughout. For access to the unpublished manuscripts of Smith's plays and to his published works I am indebted to the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and especially of the Assistant Librarian, Mr. Ernest Spofford. The text of *The Deformed* is based upon the edition of 1830, the only edition hitherto published, for which my thanks are due to the Ridgeway Branch of the Philadelphia Library. I am indebted to Mr. William Rudolph Smith for several valuable letters, written to his great-uncle, Richard Penn Smith, by Edwin Forrest and others, to which he kindly gave me access.

BRUCE WELKER McCULLOUGH.

April, 1917.

I. BIOGRAPHY

Richard Penn Smith was born in Philadelphia at the family home on the southeast corner of Chestnut and Fifth streets, the third and last son of William Moore Smith. His mother's maiden name was Ann Rudolph. The diary of his grandfather, Rev. William Smith, D.D., first Provost of the College of Philadelphia, bears the following entry relating to his birth: "March 13th, 1799. The wife of my son William Moore Smith, gave birth to a son, whom they call Richard Penn Smith, after his honor Richard Penn, Esq."¹

The young Richard could look back upon a talented and refined ancestry and enjoyed the advantages of a cultivated home life. His grandfather, who had been educated in Europe, was for twenty-five years Provost of the College of Philadelphia. He stood very high as a scholar and writer and was an eloquent preacher. And we are told that his son, William Moore Smith, enjoyed all the advantages of the most liberal education which this country afforded at that time. He was spoken of as a gentleman of the old school, who possessed a high degree of culture and was a poet of considerable reputation in his day. In early life he published a volume of poems, which was republished in England.

The early education of Richard was received at Joseph Neef's grammar school, at the Falls of Schuylkill, where he remained until he was ten years of age. During the last three years while at the Neef school he and his brother, Samuel Wemyss, were also under the care of John Sanderson, who in 1806 came to Philadelphia as private tutor to William Moore Smith's children.²

Upon leaving the Neef school the two brothers were sent to a school at Mount Airy, kept by John T. Carre. After a few years spent there, Richard, now in his teens, was sent to Huntingdon, Pa., and placed under the care of John Johnson, a Presbyterian clergyman, who had

¹ Horace Wemyss Smith: *Life of Rev. William Smith, D. D., First Provost of the College of Philadelphia*. 1880. Vol. II. Page 411.

² Sanderson was an ardent student of the Latin and Greek classics. William Moore Smith, upon one of his annual tours up the Juniata, had found him reading the classics in the original. He took a fancy to him, and brought him to Philadelphia as the tutor and companion of his two sons. While residing in the Smith family, Sanderson designed *The Lives of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence*, which was the first attempt to combine their biographies. Richard Penn Smith contributed the life of Francis Hopkinson to this work.

established a school there, and was for many years well known as a successful teacher of the Greek and Latin languages. In 1818 he returned to Philadelphia and entered the office of William Rawle to study law, with David Paul Brown, Thomas White and Thomas S. Smith as fellow students. Two years later he was admitted to practice as a member of the bar.³

The taste for letters shown by his father and grandfather soon began to take possession of him. His first appearance as an author was in the columns of the *Union*, where he published a series of moral and literary essays under the title of the *Plagiary*. Near the close of the year 1822 he purchased the newspaper establishment, then well-known throughout the country as the "Aurora."⁴

From all accounts he found the duties of an editor wearisome and, after five years, abandoned them to resume the profession of law. All of his biographers speak of his ability as a classical scholar and of his decided bent for literature. The leisure hours that came with his return to the profession of law were devoted to this favorite diversion. Morton McMichael, a personal friend of Smith, wrote a short account of him during his lifetime, which was later used as an introduction in *The Miscellaneous Works of the Late Richard Penn Smith* collected and published by his son Horace W. Smith in 1856, two years after his father's death. McMichael has the following to say of his literary tastes and acquirements: "His favorite study is the drama, and with this department of literature he is thoroughly familiar. With the dramatists of all nations he has an extensive acquaintance; and in the dramatic history of England and France, he is profoundly versed. Perhaps there are few who have studied the old masters in this art with more devoted attention, and with a keener enjoyment of their beauties."

An examination of the list of books comprising his library and sold at auction after his death would seem to bear out his biographer's statement, for surely a man's books may be said to reflect his tastes. First of all his law library, consisting of over seventeen hundred volumes, reminds us that literature was only his avocation. Of his general library there were numerous works of biography, travel, history, and poetry, but by far the largest collection devoted to a single subject was that pertaining to the English drama, which contained over three

³ Horace W. Smith: *Life of Rev. William Smith*. vol. II. p. 526.

⁴ James Rees (Colley Cibber): *The Life of Edwin Forrest*. 1874. p. 415.

hundred volumes. There were also a large number of French plays and books relating to French drama.⁵

On the 5th of May, 1823, Smith married Mrs. Elinor Matilda Lincoln. Of the five children born to this union, only one, Horace Wemyss, lived to maturity. It was this son who afterwards edited the miscellaneous works of his father and wrote a life of his great grandfather, Rev. William Smith, in two volumes. Mrs. Smith died in 1833, leaving her husband alone with his only surviving son, Horace. A very close companionship sprang up between them, of which the son gives the following account: "Well do I remember how proud I was of him; he took me with him wherever he went, and his associates and companions (child as I was) became mine. James N. Barker, Robert M. Bird, Joseph C. Neal, Edwin Forrest, James Goodman, Edgar A. Poe, Louis A. Godey, William E. Burton, Robert T. Conrad, Joseph C. Chandler and Morton McMichael were the literary magnates of Philadelphia and of all that intellectual coterie my father's star was the brightest, his wit the gayest, and his sarcasm the most cutting; as a writer he was admired; as a dramatist, at that day the most successful in the country, and with some fame as a poet, he was beloved as a companion and a gentleman."⁶

In 1836 he married Isabella Stratton Knisell and retired to the family seat at the Falls of Schuylkill, near Philadelphia, where he lived in comparative retirement. Five children were also born to this union. He died August 12, 1854.

James Rees, in his *Life of Edwin Forrest*, has called attention to the manner in which Richard Penn Smith was celebrated for his ready wit, sarcastic humor, and repartee. Few are said to have had the courage to measure lances with him in a battle of wits.

His journalistic training was doubtless responsible in part for his great facility in composition. Rees is authority for the statement that several of his pieces were written and performed at a week's notice. The entire last act of *William Penn* was written on the afternoon of the day previous to its performance. Yet this hasty production ran ten successive nights, drawing full houses, and was afterwards revived several times.⁷ This very facility of composition, however, which Smith's biographers have uniformly praised, was responsible for serious

⁵ These figures were obtained from an examination of the auctioneer's sale list.

⁶ Horace W. Smith: *Life of Rev. William Smith*. Vol. II. p. 529.

⁷ James Rees: *The Life of Edwin Forrest*, p. 417.

defects in his work. Virtually everything he wrote shows evidence of hasty composition, a fact which often resulted in lack of unity and confusion of plot, unreal characters, and lack of finish and ease of style. What a little working over would have accomplished for many of his plays is illustrated by his play *The Deformed*, first written in 1825 and called *The Divorce*. An attempt to place it upon the stage at that time was unsuccessful. Five years later it was revised by the author, met with hearty approval on the stage and remains, in my opinion, his most artistic and effective production.

Most of Smith's writing was done between the years 1825 and 1835 before he had reached the age of thirty-six. His most significant contribution to literature was in the realm of the drama. He wrote twenty plays of which fifteen were performed at various times at the Philadelphia theatres and elsewhere. He did not confine himself to play writing, but produced a novel, which had a wide sale, a large number of tales and essay-like sketches, considerable verse, and some biography and criticism.

II. THE PLAYWRIGHT

The year 1825 may be said to mark a break in our dramatic history. John Howard Payne's significant work was done and the last production of James Nelson Barker appeared on the stage in 1824. The foundation was being laid for a new school of dramatic writing which had more completely assimilated its various foreign influences. The most significant creative period our drama had yet seen was to come between the years 1825 and 1860 with the development in Philadelphia of a school of romantic tragedy. To Richard Penn Smith, somewhat of a transition figure, belongs the honor of ushering in this school.

Despite the activity of our early playwrights foreign plays had continued to dominate the stage. The number of American plays was small in comparison with the total number of plays produced. The majority of these foreign productions were new plays from England unknown to the present generation. Titles that recur most frequently in the stage histories of the time, however, belong to the Elizabethan and Restoration periods of English dramatic history, alongside the plays of Goldsmith and Sheridan. With such master-pieces the first attempts of our native playwrights had to compete. The theatrical managers, being able to get the best plays of English dramatists for nothing, felt little disposition to risk hundreds of dollars on native productions, which seldom outlived the first night unless aided by the talent of an acknowledged star.

The revolt of the American colonies however had meant more than a desire on the part of the colonists for self-government. The desire for self-government rapidly grew into a desire for complete independence of England, literary as well as social and political. The pride that Americans were beginning to feel in America required them to stand upon their own feet in all things. America, it was felt, was individual and unique and should produce her own literature, untainted by old world influences. Reviewers were ever willing and anxious to encourage native authors. Though such an attitude often led to excess of praise for everything American, it was decidedly beneficial in encouraging our native literature.

The attitude is well expressed by James Kirk Paulding in an edition of his comedies in which he says:

· "Hitherto the people of the United States have been almost entirely dependant on foreign writers for this, one of the most influential of all censors of public manners, morals and tastes, and it seems obvious that the productions of foreigners, adapted to actions in a state of society so widely different from that of our own country, can have little application to us, either as republicans or patriots. Like every other people we require a drama of our own, based on our manners, habits, character and political institutions and such a drama it seems to us, if sustained with sufficient spirit by American writers, would take root and flourish in the United States. The foundation must be laid, however weak and unfinished, and a hope, not indeed very sanguine, is entertained that this experiment may at least be sufficiently successful to stimulate others better qualified to excel in this rather neglected species of literature."¹

This desire for literary independence, admirable as was its intention to free us from the servile imitation of foreign models, often led to exaggeration. With not only the people but the critics demanding plays that would flatter the public self-love, it was but natural for the playwright to fall into excesses. Too often his so-called independence of England consisted merely in abusing her and glorifying self. Anyone showing a desire for fairness was liable to criticism. Richard Penn Smith's *Eighth of January* was criticized, by at least one reviewer, on that account. Despite the fact that it was written frankly to appeal to patriotism, to which appeal it owed its success, the reviewer criticized its author for making the English miller so likable a figure.

As we have seen, Smith began his career as a writer by contributing literary and moral essays to a newspaper. As early as 1820 he wrote a long narrative poem, entitled *Francesca da Rimini*, the manuscript of which still exists but which he did not publish because, as his son tells us, he afterwards learned that Leigh Hunt had treated the same theme. His editorship of the *Aurora* from 1822 to 1827 stimulated the writing of verse and prose tales and sketches, much of which first appeared in its columns.

In 1825 he wrote a farce entitled *The Pelican*, and a melodrama, entitled *The Divorce*, neither of which ever saw the light. The latter appeared in a revised form however five years later, as *The Deformed, or Woman's Trial*. His only long novel, *The Forsaken*, he tells us, was also written in 1825, though not published until 1831.

¹ James Kirk Paulding: *American Comedies* 1847. See preface.

The year 1828 marks his first appearance as a playwright with the performance of *Quite Correct* at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. Following this, the years 1829 and 1830 saw the production of no less than eight plays from his pen. Others followed, a complete list of which, with the place and date of publications and of first performance is here given:

Quite Correct, Phila., 1835; Chestnut Street Theatre, Phila., May 27, 1828.

The Eighth of January, Phila., 1829; Chestnut Street Theatre, Phila., January 8th, 1829.

The Disowned; or The Prodigals, Phila., 1830; Holiday Street Theatre, Baltimore, Mar. 26, 1829.

A Wife at a Venture, Walnut Street Theatre, Phila. July 25, 1829.

The Sentinels; or The Two Sergeants, Walnut Street Theatre, Phila., December 1829.

William Penn; or The Elm Tree, Walnut Street Theatre, Phila., December 25, 1829.

The Triumph at Plattsburg, New York, 1917; Chestnut Street Theatre, Phila., Jan. 8, 1830.

The Deformed, or Woman's Trial; Phila., 1830; Chestnut Street Theatre, Phila., Feb. 4, 1830.

The Water Witch, or the Skimmer of the Seas, Chestnut Street Theatre, Phila., Dec. 25, 1830.

Caius Marius, Arch Street Theatre, Phila., Jan. 12, 1831.

My Uncle's Wedding, Arch Street Theatre, Phila., Oct. 15, 1832.

Is She a Brigand? Phila., 1835; Arch Street Theatre, Phila., November 1, 1833.

The Actress of Padua, American Theatre, Phila., June 13, 1836.

The Daughter, Phila., 1836.

The Bravo.

The Bombardment of Algiers, probably never acted.

The Last Man, or The Cock of the Village, not acted.

The Pelican, not acted.

Shakespeare in Love, not acted.

The Solitary, or The Man of Mystery, not acted.

The Eighth of January, *The Disowned*, *The Deformed* and *Is She a Brigand?* were published in individual editions. *Quite Correct* and *Is She a Brigand?* were published in a collection of plays, entitled *Alexander's Modern Acting Drama consisting of the most popular plays produced at the Philadelphia Theatres and Elsewhere*. *Quite Correct* was

also published in a newspaper at the time of its popularity. *The Daughter* was included in a book of tales and sketches by Smith, entitled *The Actress of Padua*. The play which is now most accessible to the general reader is *The Triumph at Plattsburg*, which was first published in 1917 in a volume entitled *Representative American Plays* collected and edited by Prof. A. H. Quinn.

The original manuscripts of the following plays are in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia: *Quite Correct*, *A Wife at Venture*, *The Sentinels*, *William Penn*, *The Triumph at Plattsburg*, *The Pelican*, *The Last Man*, *The Solitary*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Bombardment of Algiers*, *The Divorce*, and a fragment of *The Bravo*. *The Water Witch*, *My Uncle's Wedding*, *The Actress of Padua*, and *Caius Marius*, except for quoted passages, have not been preserved.

Morton McMichael, whose account of Smith was written during his life-time, speaks of an unfinished play, entitled *The Venetian*. However he does not include *The Bravo*. James Rees and H. W. Smith, each writing at a later date, say nothing of *The Venetian* but include *The Bravo*. It is likely that *The Bravo*, the scene of which is laid in Venice, was first called *The Venetian*. It was not unusual for managers to change the titles of plays for advertising and other purposes.

Quite Correct was favorably reviewed by the papers and immediately aroused interest in the new playwright. It is an adaptation of a story entitled *Doubts and Fears*, by Theodore Hook, 1788-1841, an English writer of novels of social life. *Doubts and Fears* is one of a series of stories in nine volumes, by Hook, bearing the general title *Sayings and Doings*, 1826-1829. According to an unverified statement accompanying the play, Hook's story was based upon a comedy by Désaugiers and Gentil, entitled *L'Hôtel Garni ou la Leçon singulière*.

An English play, entitled *Quite Correct* was put on at the Haymarket, July 29, 1825, which, Genest says, was translated by Wallace from a French piece, called the *Slanderer*. Wallace's version was refused by the managers of Drury Lane. Caroline Boaden made some slight alterations and added the character of Grojan who became the central figure of the revised comedy, which was now put on at the Haymarket and acted forty-eight times.²

Ireland states that a comedy by Poole, entitled *Quite Correct* was performed at the Park Theatre, New York, Sept. 18, 1826.³ He adds

² John Genest: *Some Account of the English Stage*. 1832. Vol. 9. p. 315.

³ J. N. Ireland: *Records of the New York Stage*, 1866. Vol. I. p. 505.

the cast of characters which corresponds to the one given by Genest and to the characters in *Doubts and Fears*. It is obviously the same play and his statement that it was by Poole is probably an error.

Smith's version follows Hook's both in incidents and characters, with only slight alterations. The scene is laid at a hotel in an English watering place and the play derives its title from the efforts of the fussy landlord to maintain the respectability of his establishment; to be "quite correct" as he repeatedly says. The plot is concerned with the reunion and reconciliation of a father with his long-lost wife and daughter. A love story is woven in which ends happily when the daughter turns out to be of noble parentage. It is a farce that ends in melodrama. Broad humor and caricature in the early scenes gives way to sentiment at the end. Aside from slight inconsistencies of plot, perhaps its most serious defect lies in the early revelation of the point upon which the plot turns. Consequently the elements of suspense and climax, so essential to the success of such a play, are for the most part lost. Mere dialogue without plot or incident may well have been successful on the French stage, but when adapted for the English or American stage its meagreness in surprises detracted from its effectiveness. It proved very pleasing on the stage however and revealed considerable skill on the part of its adaptor in the matter of stage effect.

The initial success of *The Eighth of January*, first produced at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Jan. 8, 1829, is indicated in a statement in the memoirs of Wemyss to the effect that it was produced to a house of one thousand dollars, "the first and last of the same race."⁴

It was written in celebration of the victory of Andrew Jackson over the British forces, Jan. 8, 1815, in his defense of New Orleans at the close of the War of 1812. So little time was given to its composition that it was sent piecemeal to the theatre to be copied. The author apologizes, in the preface, for its hasty composition but pleads in extenuation that the principal events in the history of our country should be dramatized and exhibited at the theatres on days set apart as national festivals. It quickly declined in favor and when acted the third night for the author's benefit Durang reports that the house was not good. On the evening of its first performance the Walnut Street Theatre, not to be behind its rival, produced a parody, entitled *The Glorious*

⁴ F. C. Wemyss: *Twenty-Six Years of the Life of an Actor and Manager*. 1847. p. 165.

Eighth of January, which we are told was a ludicrous battle of New Orleans.⁵ The cast of characters was as follows:

General Jackson	Mr. Rowbotham
Colonel Kemper	Mr. Darley
Sir Edward Packenham	Mr. Wemyss
Colonel Thornton	Mr. Grierson
McFuse	Mr. Mercer
John Bull	Mr. Warren
Charles, his son	Mr. Southwell
Billy Bowbell	Mr. J. Jefferson
Rifleman	Mr. Heyl
Sergeant	Mr. Jones
Charlotte	Mrs. Rowbotham

The play centers about John Bull, a tory miller, Charles, his son, who has joined the American army, and General Jackson during the siege of New Orleans. Jackson, in disguise, advances within the enemy's line in quest of information. He is surrounded by the enemy, but is warned by Charles in time to conceal himself in John Bull's mill. Soon afterwards, when he is discovered and captured by some British soldiers, he manages to free himself by signing a request for an armistice which already bears the signature of the British commander. The last scene depicts the progress of a battle which ends victoriously for the American arms. It ends with some speechmaking followed by Jackson joining the hands of Charles and his cousin Charlotte.

A humorous vein is introduced in the person of Billy Bowbell, a simpleton who fancies that he is to marry Charlotte. The play bears a comic opera-like resemblance to reality. The dialogue is packed with exchange of compliments. John Bull is full to overflowing with noble sentiments, as is also General Jackson, who gives expression to the democratic ideals current at the time.

In his preface Smith acknowledges that he derived some assistance in writing his play from a French play by Frédéric. This was Frédéric Dupetit-Méré, 1785-1827, an extremely prolific writer of popular melodrama and vaudeville. Many of his pieces were written in collaboration with various other playwrights of his time, but they were generally published under the name of Frédéric. Querard gives a list of fifty-one plays thus produced.⁶

A play by John Howard Payne entitled *Peter Smink; or The Armistice*, first performed at the Royal Surrey Theatre, July 1822, bears

⁵ Charles Durang: *The Philadelphia Stage*, Second Series. Chap. 46.

⁶ J. M. Querard: *La France Littéraire*. Paris, 1828. Vol. 2, pp. 690 ff.

evidence of having been derived from the same source. Though its scene is laid in the Frontiers of France, indicating that it was a more direct adaptation, it depicts the same general situation. There are a miller and his daughter, a French soldier in love with the daughter, and a French general in disguise, who, upon getting into trouble similar to Jackson's, escapes by the ruse of signing an armistice. It consists of only one act and is a mere comic trifle. Smith adapted his model to a different situation and introduced a great many original details.

His next venture upon the stage was *The Disowned*, first performed at the Holiday Street Theatre, Baltimore, Mar. 26, 1829. It was acted in Philadelphia in December of the same year.⁷ Wemyss, who produced it, tells us that it first appeared as *The Prodigals*, but he rechristened it *The Disowned* in order to avail himself of the popularity of Bulwer's novel of that name. Wemyss, Durang, and Rees are authority for the statement that it and *The Deformed* were afterwards successfully performed in London.

The Disowned shows a marked advance in its author's power as a writer of drama. Like the earlier plays it is an adaptation, being founded, as he acknowledges in the preface, upon a French play, entitled *Le Caissier*, a drama in three acts, published in Paris in 1826 and written by Jouslin De La Salle (Armand-Francois), 1797-1863.

Many liberties were taken with the original in adapting it to the American stage. The dialogue is simple and full of spirit and bears evidence of taste and skill in the translation. There is no waste of words and idle declamation. The story develops rapidly and the catastrophe is striking. Following is the cast of characters as performed at the Chestnut Street Theatre:

Duval (a banker)	Mr. Hathwell
Gustavus St. Felix (his cashier)	Mr. Southwell
St. Felix (Gustavus' Uncle)	Mr. Jefferson
Malfort (a clerk)	Mr. Wemyss
Bertrand	Mr. Rowbotham
Andrew (a servant)	Mr. Murray
Notary	Mr. McDougal
Amelia	Mrs. Darley
Pauline (Duval's daughter)	Mrs. Rowbotham
Madame Mercœur	Miss Hathwell
Justine (Amelia's maid)	Miss Kerr
Soldiers, guests, servants	

The scene of this tragic melodrama is laid in a village in France. It is

⁷ Durang: Second Series. Chap. 54.

concerned with the efforts of Malfort, a villainous bank clerk, to marry the banker's daughter, Pauline. He has done everything he can to corrupt Gustavus, the favored suitor, having taught him to gamble away the bank's funds, and introduced him to Amelia, a fascinating widow. To further his schemes he employs Bertrand, a former companion in rascality, who turns out to be the ne'er-do-well brother of Amelia, and together they plot to kill the rich uncle of Gustavus. The murder is frustrated by Amelia who, in saving the intended victim, receives the dagger-thrust of her brother in her own breast. She dies and the two criminals are caught. Bertrand is thoroughly repentant.

It is interesting to note the changes thought necessary by the adaptor, of which he speaks in the preface. In the French version Amelia is not killed but retires to a convent, and Bertrand is taken into custody "the same hardened wretch as he appears in the earlier scenes." This ending did not suit Smith. Amelia is still alive and the man to whom she is so devoutly attached marries another. Also the fact that a blemish is thrown upon the character of Amelia seems to him to diminish the interest awakened by her situation. The changes indicate that Smith was a shrewd playwright who knew what his audience wanted.

As changed, the situation is rendered more striking and the play possesses a greater sense of completeness. The willing self-sacrifice of Amelia, the moral sentiments expressed by her and Bertrand, and the assurance that Gustavus will soon assuage his grief in the charms of Pauline: all these things point to a strong sentimental appeal which the play must have had on the stage.

A Wife at a Venture was first performed at the Walnut Street Theatre, July 25, 1829, with the following cast:

The Caliph	Mr. Grierson
Mourad, his favorite	Mr. Dickson
Salek, his friend	Mr. Porter
Ibad, a physician	Mr. Hathwell
Alcouz, the Caliph's jester	Mr. J. Jefferson
Cadi	Mr. Warren
Dennis O'Whack	Mr. Greene
Hassan	Mr. McDougal
Kasrak	Mr. Watson
Darina	Miss Kerr
Lira	Mrs. Willis
Rosella	Miss Hathwell

It is a confused, oriental comedy, its scene laid in Bagdad, a fitting place

for such strange incidents. The plot, which is intricate and not very skilfully constructed, is concerned with the events that follow the passage of a law by the Caliph that every true mussulman must marry, become a soldier, or pay a fine of one-third his estate. The opening scene in which Darina and Lira discuss their suitors owes something to the famous scene in *The Merchant of Venice*.

This play was probably written several years before it first appeared on the stage. The manuscript bears the dates 1818 and 1819 though each has been crossed out. Internal evidence also seems to point to an early composition. The tangled plot is constructed almost wholly out of stock situations. They consist of a forged letter, royalty in disguise, mistaken identity, a villainous guardian, a feigned marriage, and a mystery surrounding the birth of a lady. Such things are the stock in trade for writers of such jumbles of melodrama and comic opera.

The dialogue is stagy and unnatural. When Salek employs his feigned marriage to Darina to test the affections of Lira, she reproaches him in strong if not always elegant language. At first she is only cold and indifferent and gives the following reply to his banter: "You do not suppose I feel mortified at being fairly rid of your increasing importunities." But she cannot hold out against his pleasantries and, losing her womanly dignity, heaps such epithets upon him as "ungrateful, false and perfidious," "barbarous and unfeeling." She characterizes him as a "perjured, false-hearted lover," a "vile, abominable flatterer." This is in the style of the period when the distressed heroine addressed an ungallant suitor as "contemptible villain," or "base wretch." One does not have to look beyond the novels of Cooper or Simms to find such phrases.

The Sentinels; or, The Two Sergeants was first performed in December, 1829, at the Walnut Street Theatre.⁸ It was acted several times. The manuscript gives the following cast of characters for a performance in 1832 at the Chestnut Street Theatre:

Le Clair	Mr. Greenwood
Felix	Mr. S. Chapman
Morazzi	Mr. Porter
Rabateau	Mr. Allen
Gustavus	Mrs. S. Chapman (?)
Adolph	Miss Anderson
Valentine	Mr. Greene

⁸ Durang, Second Series, Chap. 51.

Sailor
 Madame Bertrand
 Madame Derville
 Laurette

Mr. Bloom
 Mrs. Stickney
 Mrs. Greene
 Miss Chapman

It is probable that the date 1832 was affixed many years later by H. W. Smith, who had failed to find a record of its earliest performance. It is a pleasant, romantic comedy or melodrama on the theme of fidelity. The two sentinels are as fast friends as Damon and Pythias, and their story is somewhat similar. The plot is filled with romantic devices that smack of the theatrical, but which must have been very effective on the stage.

During the same month in which *The Sentinels* first appeared, a new play upon a native theme, entitled *William Penn; or, The Elm Tree*, was put on at the Walnut Street Theatre, December 25, 1829. Here again the manuscript differs from Durang's account, giving a performance at the Arch Street Theatre in 1832 as the first.

Durang gives the following account which indicates that it was presented with considerable attention to its scenic effect:

"All the local scenes in and adjacent to our city, wherein the prominent events in Penn's first interview with the Indians occurred, were accurately taken and beautifully painted. The great elm tree, the ship, Welcome, floating near the bank of the Delaware, under the shadows of the majestic elm, were all beautifully depicted by the artist's brush."⁹

The cast of characters, which is altered somewhat from that given in the imperfect manuscript, is as follows:

Europeans

William Penn
 Hickory Oldboy, a Quaker
 Timothy Twist, a tailor
 Dennis O'Rudder, boatswain

Mr. Kennedy
 Mr. Chapman
 Mr. Lefton
 Mr. Greene

Indians

Malebore
 Tangoras
 Tammany
 Manta
 Oulita
 Whiska

Mr. Porter
 Mr. Greenwood
 Mr. Clarke
 Mr. Garson
 Mrs. Greene
 Miss Hathwell

The name of the heroine, Oulita, may have been suggested by a play, entitled *Oolaita, or The Indian Heroine*, by Lewis Deffebach. The two plays bear no other particular resemblance however.

⁹ Durang, Second Series. Chap. 51.

Smith's play is concerned with Penn's intervention to save the life of an Indian chief from sacrifice to a hostile tribe. The first act gives a portrayal of the Indian. It depicts his love, his desire for revenge, his heroism and self-sacrifice. In the next scene Penn is presented talking about the opportunities of the New World, a land in which he hopes the poet's dream of Arcadian happiness may sometime be realized. When appealed to, he speaks to a group of Indians who are preparing to take the life of Tammany, an Indian chief, as a sacrifice, and his power over them is so miraculous that after a few words, supplemented by some opportune claps of thunder, they all but one throw away their hatchets and Tammany is left unharmed. A new thread enters the plot at this point in the appearance of a group of boisterous sailors, but the remainder of the manuscript has been lost and the relation of this scene to the main plot cannot be determined.

We are told that the play was written in great haste, a fact of which the plot construction and dialogue bear evidence. The attempt to make the Indians speak in the particular kind of figurative language, filled with reference to objects in nature, that tradition has attributed to them, is not always successful. For a young Indian lover to say of his mistress that "the voice of Oulita is heard by the Sanbeccan as the passing breeze by the famished wolf when he scents the blood of the wild-deer" is in keeping with the tradition. But Oulita is made to plead for her father, not in such picturesque similes, but in the artificial and stilted language of any heroine in distress in the melodramas of the period. Despite its shortcomings as drama however the piece possesses a decided interest because of its attempt to portray a great historical figure.

Only a few days after the appearance of *William Penn*, Smith produced another historical play, entitled *The Triumph at Plattsburg*, first performed on January 8, 1830 at the Chestnut Street Theatre.¹⁰ It was written in celebration of the fight in Plattsburg Bay, the greatest naval battle of the War of 1812, which occurred September 11, 1814. From Durang's account it must have been put on with considerable scenic effect. Its patriotic appeal met with a warm response. Following is the cast of characters:

Major McCrea
Captain Stanley
Andre Macklegrath

Mr. Foot
Mr. Rowbotham
Mr. Maywood

¹⁰ Durang: Second Series. Chap. 55.

Captain Peabody	Mr. J. Jefferson
Corporal Peabody	Mr. McDougal
Dr. Drench	Mr. Hatwell
Elinor McCrea	Mrs. Roper
Mrs. Macklegraith	Mrs. Turner
Lucy	Miss Waring
Mrs. Drench	Miss Armstrong

Stated briefly, the plot is concerned with the efforts of Major McCrea to find his daughter Elinor who he thinks, has been seduced by a British officer. His life is endangered, but he manages to escape, taking with him his daughter, who has turned up in search of her husband. He then learns that his daughter's marriage is genuine. The remainder of the play follows the progress of the battle, which ends with a "brilliant victory for the Americans" the closing scenes being more important for their scenic effect than anything else.

The Philadelphia Daily Chronicle, on Feb. 4, 1830, bore the following announcement of a new play to be performed at the Chestnut Street Theatre:

"The Manager, ever anxious to encourage native talent, begs leave to inform his fellow citizens that the greatest care and attention has been bestowed upon the present drama, and that no effort has been wanting to render it worthy their approbation and support. This evening, February 4, will be performed an entire new drama, written by R. P. Smith, Esq., of this city, author of *The Disowned*, *Eighth of January*, etc., and which has been some weeks in preparation, called *The Deformed; or Woman's Trial*."

Its success on the stage is thus recorded by Durang:

"This was a most excellent drama and deserves a lasting reputation which it must obtain from refined taste and unprejudiced judgment."¹¹ It was repeated at various times and, according to Durang and Rees, was successfully performed in London. Mrs. Thayer chose it for her benefit performance March 18, 1839 at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, upon which occasion she appeared as Oriana.

The Deformed is based upon the second part of *The Honest Whore*, by Thomas Dekker. Smith was not the first American playwright to adapt this comedy of Dekker's. A comedy by William Dunlap, entitled *The Italian Father*, first performed at the Park Theatre, New York, April 13, 1799, and published in 1820, sprang from the same source. Thus when Smith came to write *The Deformed* he had the original and

¹¹ Durang: Third Series. Chap. 56.

its previous adaptation before him, to each of which he makes due acknowledgement.

Dunlap follows his model much more closely than Smith. The first scene of Act Four and the first scene of Act Five, both of which are relatively unimportant comic scenes, are the only scenes in *The Italian Father* not to be found in some form, in Dekker. The second scene of Act Two, both scenes of Act Three, the second scene of Act Four, and the third scene of Act Five contain new elements, but are mostly taken from Dekker. He adds very little to change the essential character of the play.

But of the fifteen scenes in *The Deformed* only six are to be found in either Dekker or Dunlap. The second scene of Act One, the second and third scenes of Act Two, both scenes of Act Three, the second and third scenes of Act Four, and the first two scenes of Act Five were invented by Smith and develop what becomes the dominant theme of the play.

Both Dunlap and Smith cut down the number of characters. The twenty-one people of Dekker's play are reduced to ten in *The Deformed*. The Duke takes the place of Hippolito in the other plays; Trebatzo occupies the place of Friscobaldo in Dekker and of Michael Brazzo in Dunlap; Beraldo and Astrabel, who get their names directly from *The Italian Father*, are Matheo and Bellefront in the original play; Lodovico occurs in all three plays. Of the remaining characters Oriana corresponds to Infelice in Dekker's play and to Beatrice in Dunlap's; while Claudio and Viola bear a slight relation to Carlo and Leonora, in Dunlap, they are virtually new characters; Adorni, the deformed, and his wife, Eugenia, who is also a sister of Astrabel, are original creations.

Dekker's two plays, entitled *The Honest Whore*, each center about the fortunes of Bellefront, a courtesan. In the earlier play her regeneration is accomplished through her failure to gain the love of a man who takes her passing fancy and his rebuke in pointing out to her her abandoned state. The second part portrays her effort to rehabilitate herself and live as a virtuous woman and dutiful wife. The interest centers about Bellefront and her father Friscobaldo.

In the similar efforts of Astrabel and her relationship with Trebatzo this theme recurs in the *The Deformed*. But it is no longer the central interest. About Adorni, whose great craving for love is only equalled by an insane jealousy, due to his physical deformity, Smith weaves a thread of incidents which form the dominant theme of the play.

The dramatic situation is heightened by the creation of Eugenia, another daughter to cause sorrow to Trebatzo by her seeming misdeeds. Trebatzo's idea of having the Duke make love to Astrabel to test her honesty is taken from Dunlap and extended to include Eugenia when suspicion falls upon her.

One notable feature in *The Deformed* is the absence of a villain, a conventionalized character thought necessary for the success of any dramatic production by most playwrights of the time. His absence marks a decided step in the direction of art. The play contains much excellent blank verse.

The Water Witch; or The Skimmer of the Seas, a dramatization of Cooper's novel, first performed at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Dec. 25, 1830, has not been preserved. The cast of characters, taken from a play-bill, was as follows:

Tom Tiller	Mr. Wemyss
Seadrift	Mrs. Young
Alderman VanBeverout	Mr. Roberts
Captain Ludlow	Mr. Woodhull
Francois	Mr. Drummond
Trysail, the master	Mr. Darley
Zephyr	Miss Kerr
Boatman	Mr. Murray
Reef	Mr. Eberle
Brom	Mr. McDougal
Alida de Barberie	Mrs. Willis

Durang speaks of the adaptation as being good, but not so good in all acting particulars and effects as a version of the same subject which was performed the next season at the Arch Street Theatre.¹² The part of Tom Tiller caused trouble. On the day before its intended production, Charles Young refused to act the character on the ground that he could not learn the words of the part. Wemyss was appealed to at this late hour and undertook and carried off the part successfully. The piece was afterwards compressed into two acts and played one night more to show some of the marine effects. The ship fight was described as terrific.

Two new versions of *The Water Witch* appeared the following year. The Arch Street production, by James Wallace, was the more popular and ran for a long season. It was said to be less prolix and dragging

¹² Durang: Third Series. Chap. 4.

than Smith's. Another version by C. W. Taylor, known as the Bowery version, was produced in New York.

Smith's next production marks definitely an attempt upon the part of the author to enter a new field. *Caius Marius* represents the romantic verse tragedy, written under the inspiration of Edwin Forrest, and included among his prize plays.¹³

The references to the tragedy in the following letter from Forrest are interesting:

Dear Smith:

I have rec'd the 4th and 5th acts of Marius but as yet have not perused them *attentively*. The third act is yet wanting to complete the play. Could you send it on so as to reach here by 12 o'clock Sat. next it would be well as on the afternoon of that day I shall depart for Boston. However it makes no material difference for by sending it addressed to the Park Theatre it would be forwarded with care to Boston. I have increasing pride for the tragedy. It is destined to make a great hit. We must take out *time*, however, to produce it, giving all the proper preliminaries such as rehearsal, costume, and the newspaper mention by implication tho' the latter if it was not the *fashion* there would in my mind be no necessity; its own merit can stand the hazard of the die—but of eulogy there must be the "due infusion." Before I leave town I will leave the necessary instructions.

I forwarded you a packet this morning by the steamboat (care of Carey & Lea) containing four volumes of *Lexington and other Fugitive Pieces*, by Prosper M. Witmore. Will you be kind enough to deliver them according to their directions and make what public notice your various duties will permit, and further may I encroach so much upon your time to discover whether Chandler, Walsh, Alexander, Rob't Morris and Willis G. Clark have rec'd their copies of *Lexington* as the Carvills (book-sellers) have forwarded them to their agent in Philada. for the above mentioned individuals.

I will have the parts of Marius copied for Boston, N. York, and Philada.

Yours sincerely,

Edwin Forrest.

Rich'd P. Smith, Esq.,

N. York 7th Oct. 1830.

My engagement here has been eminently successful.

In another letter written later he speaks of certain alteration and says that he has not yet made up his mind whether to bring it out in Boston or New York. He did, however bring it out at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, Jan. 12, 1831.¹⁴ Weymss tells us that the same play was placed in his hands in 1828 when Southwell was cast for the hero but was not produced. Outside of a few extracts it has not been

¹³ W. R. Alger: *Life of Edwin Forrest*, 1877. Vol. 1 Page 169.

¹⁴ Wemyss: *Theatrical Life*, 1847. p. 188.

preserved. It was repeated on Jan. 14, and again on the 17th which was the author's benefit night.

It was performed at the Park Theatre, New York, May 9, 1831, thus cast:

Caius Marius	Mr. Forrest
Granius	Mr. Field
Metellus	Mr. Woodhull
Sulpitius	Mr. Barry
Sylla	Mr. Richings
Cinna	Mr. Nexsen
Antonius	Mr. T. Placide
A Cimbrian	Mr. Blakely
Martha	Mrs. Sharpe
Metella	Mrs. Wallack

Upon his return from a tour in the North, in which *Caius Marius* was a companion piece in a repertoire with *Spartacus*, *William Tell*, *Virginius*, and *Lear*, Forrest again acted it in Philadelphia, November, 1831. Durang gives the following account of its performance:

"The fable of this tragedy was founded upon the historical events in the career of Caius Marius, the celebrated Roman who from a humble rustic became a general and consul, successfully defending his country against hosts of barbarians; yet with all his patriotic and victorious achievements, he became one of the most cruel and bloody tyrants Rome ever beheld. When fleeing as a fugitive from Italy he sought refuge in Africa and arriving at Carthage he sat amidst its celebrated ruins as a signal monument of moral prostration, as the annihilated marbles of its city declared its isolation and destruction. When thus seen and spoken to, he answered the slave: 'Go tell your master you saw Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage.'"

"The play was dramatically constructed, with the vigor of language and harmony of versification, eventualizing in poetic justice. It was written with a view to the development of Forrest's peculiar powers, which were well fitted to impart to the subject all its terrific historical colorings."¹⁵

The critics were unanimous in praising the literary quality of the production. It was an attempt to combine literature and drama and it is a misfortune that the manuscript was not preserved.

My Uncle's Wedding was first performed at the Arch Street Theatre, October 15, 1832.¹⁶ The manuscript of this play has not been preserved

¹⁵ Durang. Third Series. Chap. 10.

¹⁶ Durang. Third Series. Chap. 25.

and I have found no comment on its performance more explicit than that it was a pleasing and spirited little comedy.

Is She a Brigand? was first performed at the Arch Street Theatre, Nov 1, 1833,¹⁷ with the following cast:

Colonel Herman	Mr. Sprague
Lindorf	Mr. Jones
Peter Schnaps	Mr. T. Placide
Fribourg	Mr. Horton
First Friend	Mr. James
Second Friend	Mr. Foster
Fritz	Mr. Logan
Clara, Countess D'Albi	Miss Riddle
Bridget, her maid	Mrs. Jones
Mariette	Mrs. Conduit

Soldiers, Villagers, and Guests.

It is a farce comedy which, as he states on the title page, was altered from the French. What his exact source was I have not been able to learn.

Mistaken identity is the central factor of the plot. Clara, Countess D'Albi, is hastening to the chateau of Colonel Herman, her former lover, in order to prevent his marriage, when she is mistaken for Clara Wendell, a notorious brigand, and held up at a Swiss hotel. Realizing that an attempt to establish her identity will delay her more, she confesses that she is the brigand and claims that her band is already awaiting her signal to attack and pillage the chateau of Colonel Herman. She promises to place them all in the burgomaster's power if he will conduct her there at once. The ruse works and she reaches her lover only to find that his reported marriage was contrived to test her affections. The burgomaster, who has been so completely duped, lamely excuses himself by claiming that he has been aware of the real situation all along and has taken this means of escorting Countess D'Albi in safety to the chateau.

The plot is essentially farcical. Herman's unique method of testing the affection of Clara betrays more faith than good judgment on his part. And the picture of the sensitive and refined countess hastening to prevent the marriage of her lover, with whom she has recently quarreled, is equally in the nature of farce. The most interesting personage is the burgomaster, who is pompous, stupid and cowardly. His training in Paris is an ill-fitting garment and his high opinion of himself as a gallant

¹⁷ Durang. Third Series. Chap. 30.

only serves to render his oily gallantries the more odious to Clara. The dialogue is lively and sparkling, and abounds in humor. The situation is highly amusing and is at all times clear.

The earliest announcement I have found of a performance of *The Actress of Padua* is a playbill announcing its performance at the American Theatre, Philadelphia, June 13, 1836 with the cast here given:

Angelo Malipieri	Mr. Conner
Homodei	Mr. Muzzy
Anasfesto	Mr. Moreton
Priest	Mr. Brittingham
Black Page	Miss Packard
Rodolpho	Mr. J. G. Porter
Prior of St. Antoine	Mr. Search
Troilo	Mr. Cronta
Night Watch	Mr. Collingbourne
Tisbe (Actress of Padua)	Miss Waring
Reginella	Mrs. Dunham
Daphne	Miss Charnock
Catherina Bragadina	Mrs. Willis

It was published in narrative form in 1836 but has not been preserved in its dramatic form. A melodrama by Victor Hugo, entitled *Angelo, Tyran de Padoue* is the source of Smith's production. Judging from the narrative version his play must have been a comparatively direct translation. The incidents in the narrative are the same and much of the dialogue is taken directly from the French.

It is a stirring tale of love, jealousy and mystery in erotic Italy of the sixteenth century. Its plot is laid in an atmosphere of crime and intense passion. But La Tisbe, the actress, who is in the grip of this passion, is a heroic figure. She remains loyal and faithful to her pledge even when it means sacrificing her life to save a woman who has won from her the only man she ever loved.

This play enjoyed the longest popularity of any of Smith's productions. It was produced at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in 1851 with Charlotte Cushman in the title rôle. She appeared as La Tisbe at the Lyceum Theatre, New York, September 29, 1851,¹⁸ and at the Broadway Theatre, May 8, 1852.¹⁹ It was performed at the New Bowery Theatre, Feb. 16, 1860, with Lucile Western as La Tisbe and Helen Western as Catharina.²⁰ Lucile Western again ap-

¹⁸ J. N. Ireland: *Records of the New York Stage*, 1867. Vol. 2. p. 600.

¹⁹ Ireland: Vol. 2. p. 594.

²⁰ T. A. Brown: *A History of the New York Stage*, 1903. Vol. 2. p. 191.

peared in the title rôle at Tripler Hall in the spring of 1863.²¹ Further notice is given in Brown of a performance of *The Actress of Padua* at Daly's Broadway Theatre, Nov. 8, 1873, with Virginia Vaughan as Tisbe.²²

Minna Gale in the leading part.²³

The Daughter appears to have been among the last of Smith's plays to appear on the stage. It is included by Rees and McMichael among the acted plays but I have found no account of its performance. It was dramatized from a French novel, published in 1808, entitled *Le siège de La Rochelle, ou le malheur de la conscience*, by Madame de Genlis, 1746-1830, a French writer and educator who, in addition to several ingenious books on education, wrote a large number of historical romances. *The Daughter* portrays the closing scenes of her highly-wrought and sentimental novel. It bears no resemblance to a play by Sheridan Knowles, entitled *The Daughter* and first performed at Drury Lane in 1836.

The characters of Smith's production are:

Count Rosenberg, husband of Euphemia.

Valmore, French Ambassador

Montalban, supposed father of Clara

Peter, Marcelle's son

Euphemia, sister of the Grand Duke of Lithuania.

Clara, under the name of Olympia

Marcelle, a cottager

Mystery, crime and intrigue are the materials that go into the construction of this domestic drama. Its complicated plot centers about a girl who has been unjustly convicted of killing her fiancé's son. Silence is enforced upon her by the fear that the man, whom she supposes to be her father, is the real murderer. After having suffered much pain and distress, she eventually comes into her own in discovering her real father and mother and winning back her lost lover. The ending, which is typical of this class of plays, is in accord with the wishes of Marcelle who says, while thinking of Clara: "I can not bear the idea of crime triumphing over persecuted virtue."

Like the majority of Smith's plays, and the other plays of the period, *The Daughter* lacks naturalness. All the characters use the same kind of stilted language. The humble cottager, Marcelle, employs cul-

²¹ Brown: *New York Stage*. Vol. 1. p. 456.

²² Brown. Vol. 2. p. 392.

tivated phrases similar to those of Count Rosenberg, Montalban, the villain, when accused of crime, replies thus: "Unworthy woman, are you aware of the barbarity of your calumnious imputations, and the punishment that you may invoke upon yourself?"

The characters are nearly all types in the conventional mould. Montalban is a half-hearted villain who no sooner confesses than he turns moralist and declaims against the sin of avarice. Clara, the heroine, suffers from an excess of virtue. Peter, the simple-minded son of Marcelle, and the only character who does not succumb to the gloom that enshrouds Clara's existence, keeps up his spirits by the thought of good things to eat.

James Rees and H. W. Smith include *The Bravo* in the list of acted plays. Apparently it was the last one to appear. It is a dramatization of Cooper's novel of that title, a highly-wrought tale of mystery, crime and revenge in Italy during the fifteenth century. The manuscript has not been preserved. I give here a letter received by Smith, which indicates the date and a probable performance.

New York

Sunday, 4th of Dec. 1836

My dear Sir:

If your intention and wish is still the same, and you will send me forthwith a revised copy of your play of *The Bravo*, I shall be most happy to receive it, and will give it my *best* attention, and will have it produced in the south to the *best* of my ability, and with the *best* means the theatres can afford, and it will have my *best* wishes that its success may be "*most best*."

If our friend, Maywood, will go to a little expense for it, I think it might be made a good card to commence my May engagement with,—and as you will be on the spot all the time, you can urge them on to exertion, and see that the scenery etc. be appropriate. I sail on the 12th. Let me hear from you by return.

My dear sir,

Your obliged friend,

J. W. Wallack.

The Bombardment of Algiers, written in 1829, deals with a series of incidents in the French conquest of Algeria. It is a translation of a three-act melodrama by Frédéric Dupetit-Méré, entitled *Le Bombardement d'Alger, ou le Corsaire Reconnaissant*, a second edition of which was published in Paris in 1815.²³ I have found no evidence that Smith's translation was ever performed. A play, entitled *Slaves in Barbary; or The Bombardment of Algiers*, dealing with the same theme but written by John K. Kerr, was performed eleven times during Octo-

²³ J. M. Quérard: *La France Littéraire*. Vol. 2, p. 690.

ber, 1830, at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia.²⁴ Kerr's version doubtless came from the same French source as Smith's. The cast of characters, while it does not wholly correspond, shows considerable similarity, thus indicating a common source and similarity of theme. The manuscript of Smith's play gives the following cast of characters:

Ismael Meramorte, Dey of Algiers —	Grierson
Chevalier Choiseuil	Southwell
Barbuctar	Rowbotham
Osmín, a eunich of the harem	J. Jefferson
Almutacem	Murdock
Benjamin	Placide
Nilouf, chief of the eunichs	Hathwell
A crier	
Valentine, Choiseuil's Wife	Mrs. Rowbotham
Slaves, guards, soldiers, sailors.	

This cast, to which other names are added, appears to be merely a suggestion of the author and not to refer to any actual performance. It is a striking but wild and confused melodrama with a great deal of fighting in the last act. There is no reason why it could not have been made very effective on the stage. A vein of humor permeates a large part of it. It is full of thrilling situations such as Valentine's escape from the harem. She is captured and again escapes. The character of Barbuctar adds to the heroic quality of the play. At the risk of incurring the anger of the Dey he reveals to him the misery and dissatisfaction of his people and the falseness of his flatterers. The play ends happily. Peace is restored; Choiseuil and his wife are re-united; and Almutacem, the villain, is hauled away to pay for his crimes. It is a typical melodrama.

The Last Man; or The Cock of the Village and *The Pelican* are trivial farces which bear evidence of having been adapted from the French.

Shakespeare in Love is a direct translation of a French play by Alexandre Duval, entitled *Shakespeare Amoureux*. It is a short play of only three characters, based upon a glaring anachronism in having Shakespeare fall in love with an actress who is playing in Richard III. Dunlap gives an anonymous play, bearing the same title as Smith's, as having been acted in Boston before 1832.²⁵ It is likely that this was some other translation of Duval.

²⁴ Durang. Third Series. Chap. 11.

²⁵ Dunlap. *History of the American Theatre*, 1832. p. 407.

The Solitary; or The Man of Mystery is an unfinished melodrama, dealing with Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and in which crime, mystery, and intrigue are the leading motives.

Smith's total contribution to the stage may be divided into five classes; namely, melodrama, historical plays, tragedy, comedy, and farce. Of these classes only the historical plays and verse tragedy are sharply defined. The historical plays, three in number, are of particular interest because of the historical scenes and incidents they represent. Though written in haste and sometimes without due regard for the niceties of dramatic art, they afford good examples of the remarkable facility of the age in representing current events upon the stage. Their significance is increased by the fact that they form Smith's most original contribution.

Perhaps his most pretentious effort to produce drama with a distinct literary quality was his verse tragedy, *Caius Marius*, unfortunately lost to us. Its literary quality was uniformly praised by the reviewers.

The remaining three classes, comedy, farce, and melodrama, are by no means clearly differentiated, but shade off into each other by imperceptible degrees. Comedy mingles with melodrama in the two farces, *Quite Correct* and *Is She a Brigand?* as it does in other of his plays.

The one word that may be applied most uniformly to the plays is melodrama. It pervades nearly all of Smith's work. It combines with humor in *A Wife at a Venture*, and with tragedy in *The Disowned* and *The Actress of Padua*. It invades the historical plays, notably *William Penn*. In such plays as *The Deformed* and *The Sentinels* it is at its best.

All of the extant plays are in prose except *The Deformed* which contains both prose and verse. Considering that he practiced so little in that form his blank verse possesses a high degree of flexibility and naturalness and is not without beauty and distinction.

Sensational incident and broad humor mark the plays as a whole. They are stories of passion, terror, or lively fun. Subtle distinctions of character or shades of feeling are not to be found. Lavish sentiment, romantic background, conventional characters, cumbrous and showy prose and violent action are the most striking characteristics.

The fact that Smith was an adaptor and translator led to a preponderance of foreign themes. Only three of his extant plays have native settings. He was not without invention, however, and the

majority of things he adapted he made distinctively his own. In his best productions he attains a natural and flexible style possessing grace and beauty; his characters engage our interest and sympathy; and his plots unfold swiftly and with dramatic intensity.

As a transition playwright, Smith ties the former period of imitation to the new creative school of dramatists that was just coming into existence in Philadelphia. Though much of his work harks back to the time when adaptation was the customary practice among our playwrights, his best productions, notably *Caius Marius*, point forward to the first great creative movement in our drama. This was the period of romantic tragedy which produced such notable contributions to our dramatic literature as *The Gladiator* and *The Broker of Bogota* by Robert Montgomery Bird; *Jack Cade*, by Robert T. Conrad; and, as a climax to the group, *Francesca da Rimini*, by George Henry Boker.

III. NOVELIST AND CRITIC

Richard Penn Smith did not confine himself to drama as a field of literary expression. Beginning with contributions to *The Union* and *The Aurora*, he continued for many years to supply the various magazines with valuable criticism of current literature. I have hitherto referred to his biography of Francis Hopkinson in 1823. Other productions were *The Forsaken*, 1831; *The Actress of Padua*, a collection of stories, 1836; *Colonel Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, a pseudo-autobiography, 1836; and a *History of Philadelphia*, about 1828. A volume, entitled *A Tale of a Tub*, has been attributed to him. After his death a volume, entitled *The Miscellaneous Works of the Late Richard Penn Smith*, was issued by his son.

The Forsaken is Smith's most pretentious literary performance. It is his only long novel and its appearance was hailed in terms of loud praise by the papers generally. The author tells us in the preface that the story was written in the early part of the year 1825, at which time he contemplated publishing it under the title of *Paul Gordon*.

The scene of the story is laid in and about Philadelphia during the Revolution, and presents many historic incidents enacted during that memorable period. The Battle of Germantown, the starved and freezing soldiers at Valley Forge, the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, and the festivities attending the departure of Sir William Howe are some of the historic scenes that form the background of the story.

It owes something to Cooper and Scott but its inspiration seems to come more particularly from the sentimental novel of intrigue that so greatly influenced our earliest novelists.

A brief outline of the complicated plot reveals its highly-wrought character. The story centers about Jurian Hartfield and two girls, Miriam Grey and Agatha Morton, between whose love he vacillates. Another person who figures very importantly is Paul Gordon, a highwayman, and the villain of the story.

A strange mystery hangs about the birth of Jurian, who as an infant has been adopted by Captain Swain and his wife and reared by them. He is a studious lad and, while at the Academy of Philadelphia, forms an intimate friendship with Edward Morton, a classmate. Through his friend he is introduced to the Mortons', a wealthy tory family in Philadelphia, and a close intimacy grows up between him and Agatha,

Squire Morton's daughter. But he has already won the love and confidence of Miriam, the daughter of Alice Grey, who keeps a humble inn in Darby, near Philadelphia.

Paul Gordon also loves Miriam. He goes by the name of Jones and, while not engaged in his profession of highway robbery, is an unoffending servant of Squire Morton. In order to free himself of his rival, he falsely leads Jurian to believe that Miriam has been disloyal. This misunderstanding between Jurian and Miriam, whom he has wronged, eventually leads to her disaster. Deserted by her lover and haunted by shame and fear, she leaves home and wanders from place to place in search of shelter, which is denied her, until she finally gives birth to a dead child, of which Jurian is the father. She is found in a demented state, with her dead babe lying in the snow, and is put in prison, charged with infanticide.

In the meantime Jurian has learned that he is the illegitimate son of Alice Grey, Miriam's mother. The horror that he and Miriam feel when they discover that they are brother and sister is unspeakable. But it is found that she is not the daughter of Alice Grey, and they are spared the crime of incest.

Meanwhile Gordon has been betrayed, in Delilah fashion, by his mistress and handed over to the authorities. He and Miriam are lodged in the same prison, and both are convicted and sentenced to death. She dies on the day of execution just before Jurian arrives with a reprieve.

Jurian is now determined to leave the country, in which he has suffered nothing but ill-fortune, but goes for a last sight of Agatha, who has been all this time repining amid the overtures of British officers. When she has Jurian in her arms once more she will not let him go until her father has consented to their marriage.

Such a brief summary of the story must of necessity omit everything but the bare outlines and gives an inadequate sense of the real quality of the novel, which is rich in humor and adventure. While the author lacks the skill of Cooper in throwing in an effective background, the novel is very effectually woven into its background of life in Philadelphia. Its fighting and adventure and stilted language is somewhat in the manner of Cooper. As is often the case in such romances the best characterization is of the minor characters.

A genuine and spontaneous flow of humor enlivens many of its chapters and marks its superiority to many of our early novels. Take,

for example, the boasting of Corporal Drone, who carefully avoids all danger, or the ludicrous mistakes of Rebecca, an elderly spinster, who is continually introducing learned topics into her conversation, in season and out of season. Sometimes there is a happy bit of characterization as in the following description of Mauns, which smacks of Irving:

"Mauns never relished a long story so much as when he had a meerschaum in his mouth; accordingly Aoki, who was a very Arab in the way of fiction, no sooner commenced, than our worthy began to fix his pipe, and called for a coal of fire, aware that Aoki's story was entitled to a patient hearing, and thus prepared he could have set out the Arabian Nights without interruption other than that which might be occasioned by knocking the ashes from his pipe and replenishing it with tobacco."

Events that would inspire horror were legitimate material for the novelist of this period. Horror is heaped upon horror until the sensitiveness of the reader is dulled and little power of sympathy remains. Seduction, duelling, robbery, war, ingratitude: such are the materials that go into the making of the story. Sin pursues its victims relentlessly to the end. Vice, in the person of Gordon, is punished. Some dissatisfaction was felt among the reviewers at the sad fate of Miriam alongside the rich reward of Jurian, whose sins were more culpable. So great a dissimilarity of fates did not satisfy the craving for poetic justice. The ending does, however, conform to the requirements of such a sentimental novel. Miriam finds relief from her grief in a death which, at the same time, leaves Jurian free to pursue his more ambitious and mature love for Agatha.

A tendency to moralizing sometimes impedes the progress of the story, but on the whole it develops with rapidity and interest. Occasionally the author lays aside his bookish style and writes with directness and forcefulness. So it is in the trial scene in which Miriam is convicted of concealing the murder of her child. Here the style, held in check by an admirable restraint, is simple, condensed, and deeply pathetic.

The Actress of Padua, in addition to *The Daughter* and *The Actress of Padua* in narrative form, contains a large number of stories, several of which had previously been published in magazines. A number of them possess a graceful and pleasing style and light essay-like quality

that well repay reading. Others, in my mind less excellent, belong to the school of horror that Poe was soon to raise to distinction.

To mention only a few of the stories, among which there is considerable diversity, *The Campaigner's Tale* tells of a man who is shot for insubordination in the army. *The Last of the Tribe* portrays an Indian chief, condemned to death for committing murder—an act of justice in accordance with the mandates of his tribe. Rather than allow himself to be hanged he has his wives poison him and bury him out of reach of the interference of the pale faces. *Retribution*, *The Sea Voyage* and *The Leper's Confession* are somewhat in the manner of Poe and Charles Brockden Brown, though they ante-date most of the work of the former. Further relation to this school of writing is shown by *The Apparition*, which is about a ghost that turns out to be a scarecrow. Other stories follow, ranging from farce in *A Tale of Hard Scrabble*, and broad humor in *The Man with a Nose*, which is reminiscent of Irving, to melodrama in *The Emigrant's Daughter*, a tale of love, mystery, and crime.

In some ways the most remarkable of Smith's literary productions is a pseudo-autobiography, entitled *Colonel Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas*. It purports to be the memoirs of David Crockett, the most famous frontiersman of his day who was killed in the massacre at the Alamo, 1836, the same year in which the book was written. According to the sub-title it contains a full account of his journey from Tennessee to the Red River and Natchitoches, and thence across Texas to San Antonio and includes many hair-breadth escapes along with a topographical, historical and political view of Texas. Fortunately this promise is not kept and the Colonel exercises considerable freedom in his chatty and, at the same time, racy narrative. He is depicted as a blustering politician of Tennessee who, having been disappointed in political hopes, decides to go to Texas. He gives a lively account of his adventures, interspersed with humorous and satiric comments. There is a breath of outdoor life; hunting, fighting, and adventures with Indians.

It gained great popularity and, in 1837, was reprinted in London where it was received favorably by the critics. The London Monthly Review compared it to Goldsmith for pathos and to Swift for satire. Chamber's *Edinburgh Journal*, completely deceived by its air of sincerity, quoted from it as the best account of the then-existing state of affairs in Texas. Fraser's Magazine devoted eighteen pages to a re-

view commending it for its quaint humor and graphic description. Its sly roguery was thought to be characteristic of American manners.

The author had never been to Texas and his account was plainly exaggerated for humorous effect. Consequently it is amusing to read the following comment by a London reviewer:

"We wish we had a few more such books—or rather, indeed, a good many more such books—not occupied with romantic nonsense, like the Bee-hunter and his Kate of Nacogdoches—nor travelling into Texas, or anywhere else out of the Union; but giving us sketches by native hands of the actual manner in which they manage affairs in the United States. If any stranger go among them and cannot find everything bright and golden, if he see a single speck upon the whiteness of their garments, an outcry is raised from New England to Florida, and the unhappy author is assailed by a hundred angry pens, and threatened with a hundred angrier cowhides."¹

The rest of Smith's work has less significance for us as literature. The *History of Philadelphia* serves to indicate the versatility of its author. It deals with such topics as the topography, commerce, manufactures, religious, charitable and educational institutions, the condition of literature and kindred subjects.

A satiric essay, entitled *A Tale of a Tub* published in Philadelphia in 1826, purporting to be by *Democritus Americanus*, has been attributed to Smith though I have found no confirmatory evidence of his authorship. It begins as a satire directed against phrenology. From this it proceeds to attack the method of the white man in wronging the Indian out of his land, and ends with a protest against the slave traffic. It seems unlikely that Smith, who showed little concern for the problems of his day, should have written in such an outspoken, satiric vein. The stories and sketches, published after his death, are similar to those in *The Actress of Padua*. Generally speaking, they are more uniformly moral in tone, some of them being simply moral fables or allegories.

Little can be said of Smith as a writer of tales that has not been already said of him as a playwright. Sentiment occupies the same dominant position as in the plays. Broad humor and violent action invade the stories in much the same fashion. There are even more horrible situations and there is a greater indulgence in moralizing.

Very much of the diction is stilted as it is in the plays. The memoirs of Colonel Crockett, dashed off in imitation of an uneducated fron-

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*. Vol. 16. p. 610.

tiersman, are written in an admirably clear and vigorous style, unusual for Smith. A sentence in the preface explains this. It purports to come from a friend of Crockett, who, upon editing his memoirs subsequent to his death, thus apologizes for the simple language of his friend:

“His plain and unpolished style may occasionally offend the taste of those who are sticklers for classic refinement; while others will value it for that frankness and sincerity which is the best voucher for the truth of the facts he relates.”

It is unfortunate that Smith did not see fit to employ such a plain and unpolished style in his more pretentious and serious productions. For, when he donned the garb of respectability, he seemed to feel that good taste required him to ornament his style. Consequently he loaded his sentences with unwieldy, bookish words and strove for impressive, high-sounding phrases. The result was often a turgid and pompous style, unsuitable alike for narration or dialogue.

THE
DEFORMED,

OR,

WOMAN'S TRIAL,

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY RICHARD PENN SMITH,

Author of the Disowned, Eighth of January, A Wife at a Venture,
Quite Correct, Sentinel, &c. &c.

As performed at the Chesnut street Theatre—Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA EDITION.
C. ALEXANDER, PR.

.....
1830.

PREFACE

A large portion of *The Deformed* was written as early as the year 1825, when an unsuccessful attempt was made to introduce it upon the stage. About a year ago, at the request of a favorite performer, I was induced to revise my almost forgotten manuscript; it was brought forward, and its reception was such, as leaves no cause to regret that I followed his advice.—The play is in imitation of the old English drama, and the outline of some of the characters may be found in a coarse comedy, by Decker. Mr. Dunlap, of New York, built his *Italian Father* upon the same comedy, which will account for the occasional similarity between this production and that excellent drama. The first scene, in the fourth act, is modelled upon a scene in the *Italian Father*, and the incident of Beraldo seeking the Duke at the palace, to chastise him is imitated from the same play. Those who are of opinion that I have fallen short of my original, may safely proclaim it without fear of contradiction. In submitting the following scenes to the press, I must beg the reader to bear in mind that they were written rather for the stage than for the closet, and that many passages which are vapid in perusal, prove effective in performance. *The Deformed* is intended as an *acting play*, and as such its merits and defects are to be tested.

R. P. S.

Philadelphia, May 1, 1830.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Duke of Florence.....	Mr. Wemyss
Trebatzo, (a Nobleman).....	Foot
Adorni, (the Deformed).....	Maywood
Beraldo, (a Profligate).....	Rowbotham
Claudio.....	Forbes
Lodovico.....	Porter
Oriana, (Duchess of Florence).....	Mrs. Rowbotham
Eugenia, (Wife of Adorni).....	Roper
Astrabel, (Daughter of Trebatzo, and Wife of Beraldo).....	Greene
Viola	Miss Waring

Soldiers, Senators, Nobles, &c., &c.

ACT I

SCENE 1

Outside of a Palace. Time—Sunrise.

Enter LODOVICO and CLAUDIO.—R. H.

Lodo. Here's a morning, Claudio, to tempt Jove from his Ganymede, but, bright as it is, a plague of this early rising, say I. My head pays for it. By my knighthood, if I were but Phoebus' charioteer, the duke would not have had such a morning as this for his merry making. I get up with clouds on my brow.

Clau. His grace is early abroad to celebrate the anniversary of his wedding.

Lodo. Men rise by times who have been four years married, signor, and this day completes that term of his probation. I have reason to remember the time, for on that day the wings were clipped of two as brave spirits as any here in Florence. They could never soar above the earth since. I mean his grace and poor Beraldo.

Clau. What, Beraldo, whom the late duke married, on compulsion, to count Trebatzo's daughter? He was a wild blade, was he not?

Lodo. Indeed was he, but that marriage tamed him. And though he was then high in favor at court, he has been travelling crab fashion ever since. O, it's a straight and easy course from the top of the hill to the bottom! Poor Beraldo, once fortune's favorite—now lies in

prison condemned to death for a mortal wound inflicted on one of the roaring boys in a duel.

Claud. What was the cause of their quarrel?

Lodo. Faith, I know not, but 'tis said they found it at the bottom of a flaggon of wine. Many a fight lies *perdu* there, signor, and Beraldo was one who would drink to the dregs, but he would come at it. The young duke once was of the same stamp also. Many a roaring set-to have we had together; there was music in the trio, but they have changed their merry note since their marriage.

Claud. Here comes the duchess and her party. She is indeed a lovely creature.

Lodo. So was Scipio's wife to all the world, while he alone knew where the sandal pinched him.

Claud. I have hear'd that she's of a jealous temper.

Lodo. So much so that his grace cannot stir a foot from her girdle without being catechised. He has no more freedom than her hawk when he flies hoodwinked with a string to his leg. So much for matrimony.

Enter ORIANA, VIOLA, EUGENIA, ADORNI and others.—R. H.

Ori. Good morning, gentlemen. The sun is fairly up. Where tarries his grace, the duke? We should have been in the field an hour since.

(CLAUDIO and LODOVICO court VIOLA.)

Viola. You are fond of falconry, my lady?

Ori. And thou too girl, and hast, I perceive, but little mercy on thy quarry.—Signor Adorni, sets the wind right? Shall we have sport today?

Ador. I know not my lady. Those sports that depend upon the shifting of the wind, it may not be safe to promise.

Ori. What, splenetic, while all around are smiling! Eugenia, look to thy husband. Thou'rt to blame, girl, for suffering him to go at large in such a humour. Lodovico, seek the duke and hasten his departure.

(Exit LODOVICO.—R. H.)

Ador. (*Apart*) Her scoff! You see how it is, Eugenia!

Eug. Mistake her not. She did not mean to wound you. Be more cheerful.

Enter the DUKE, followed by LODOVICO.—R. H.

Duke. I fear I have made you wait, love.

Ori. Your grace was not wont to be the last.

Duke. Now then to horse, and let us spur on until we overtake time.

Ori. That requires swift steeds, my lord. (*Going.*

Enter ASTRABEL with a paper, meeting them.—L. H.

Astra. I pray your grace's pardon, and beseech you read o'er this wretched paper.

Duke. I am in haste; prithee, good woman, take some other time.

Astra. Did'st ever know a time unsuited to a gracious deed? Read it for mercy's sake.

Duke. I am in haste.

Astra. So are the hours that bear Beraldo to the scaffold.

Duke. Beraldo!—Go on before. Lodovico attend the duchess; I will but read and follow.

Lodo. Put on yellow, my lady—that letter's from a mistress.

Ori. Oh! sir, you cannot make me jealous.

Lodo. True, I cannot, but perhaps the duke may.

(Exeunt all but the DUKE and ASTRABEL.—L. H.)

Duke. Are you Beraldo's wife?

Astra. That most unfortunate woman.

Duke. I am sorry these storms have fallen upon him. The remembrance of former friendship still dwells strongly with me, and if it appear that in fair fight he hurt his adversary, I will strain the law to save his life. Tomorrow I will seek your house, and bring, I hope, joyful tidings. Direct me to it.

Astra. I will enquire here, at your palace gate.

Duke. Not so.

Astra. In truth, our dwelling place would shame your highness.

Duke. So poor, too. What now?

Enter LODOVICO.—L. H.

Lodo. My lady asks if your grace is coming.

Duke. Ride softly on before; I'll overtake her.

Lodo. She vows by hawk, and hound, and horse, she will not on a foot without you.

(Exit LODOVICO.—L. H.)

Duke. I come, I come. Tomorrow I will see you. Commend me to Beraldo. (*She is going.*) One word more. You are count Trebatzo's daughter?

Astra. I once did call him father, but now, such rude spots of shame

stick on my cheek, that he knows me not by the name of daughter.

Duke. Thou wert his favorite child—and does he nothing for you?

Astra. All he should. When children start from duty, parents may swerve from love. He nothing does, for nothing I deserve.

Duke. Shall I endeavor to restore you to his favor?

Astra. Oh! my lord! you may restore my husband from the jaws of death—but to restore me to a father's love; O! impossible! impossible!

(*Burst into tears. Exit.—R. H.*)

Duke. It shall be put to trial, notwithstanding. She is fair and seeming virtuous. How is this! the count

Enter TREBATZO. L. H.

Trebatzo in the vicinity of the ducal palace! then miracles have not yet ceased.

Treb. 'Tis now sometime since I stood in the sunshine of the court, and I did not suppose that your grace would remember so slovenly an attendant as old Trebatzo.

Duke. Oh! sir, our friends should be unto us as our jewels are: valued as dearly, being locked up and unseen, as when we wear them.

Treb. Nobly said. It does my old heart good to see your grace, at least once in a twelve-month, and that is my business abroad so early.

Duke. And trust me, I rejoice to see that the winter of life has not yet chilled your blood. The sickle of time hath gone over you, but you are still the same.

Treb. Fields are mown down and stripped bare, and yet they wear green coats again.

Duke. Scarce can I read the stories on your brow which age has written there.

Treb. My brow is somewhat furrowed, my lord, but my heart shall never have a wrinkle in it, so long as I can cry "hem" with a clear voice, and look in the face of my fellow creature with a clear conscience.

Duke. You are a happy man, sir!

Treb. Happy! O! yes. I am not covetous; I am not in debt; have fought by the old duke's side, but I have never cringed at his feet. No man I fear; no man I fee. I would not die like a rich man, to carry nothing away, save a winding sheet; but as a just man, who leaves an unspotted name behind him, and like the swan goes singing cheerfully to his nest.

Duke. I repeat it, you are happy, and doubtless make those around you so. Your wife and children.

Treb. My lord!—I have no wife—no children.

Duke. Is your wife dead, sir?

Treb. Yes! but she is still with me. Here; she's here. (*Pointing to his heart.*) When a knave and a fool are married, they walk together like bailiff and debtor; and when death comes they are separated.—But a good couple are never parted.

Duke. You had a daughter too, sir, had you not?

Treb. O, yes, and have her still. Adorni's wife.—Thou knowest her. The pride of your court; the solace of my age.

Duke. I meant not her. A younger daughter, if my memory fails not.

Treb. (*With emotion*) O! my lord! this old tree had another branch, and but one more growing out of it. It was young, it was fair, it was straight. I pruned it daily, dressed it carefully, kept it from the wind, helped it to the sun; yet for all my skill in planting, it grew crooked. The fruit it bore was bitter. I hewed it down! What's become of it I neither know nor care.

Duke. Then can I tell you what's become of it.—That branch is withered.

Treb. It was so long ago.

Duke. Her name, I think, was Astrabel. Her husband's—

Treb. Curse on him—name him not.

Duke. She is dead.

Treb. Ha! dead!

Duke. Yes! what of her was left, not worth the keeping, e'en in my sight was thrown into the grave. She's turned to earth.

Treb. Would she were turned to heaven! Peace be with her; blessings be on her grave. Dead! Is she dead! well, well, I am glad on't! No drunken reveller will now at midnight beat at her doors. The grave will protect her from pollution—'tis well. She will sleep now—and in her grave, sleep all my shame and her own, and all my sorrows and all her sins.

Duke. I am glad to see you are not marble.

Treb. O, sir! this is the first tear I have shed since she deserted me. 'Tis hot, scalding hot, and the heaps of ice about my heart, by which a father's love was frozen up, are now dissolved to tears. My poor misguided child, I feel too late that I am still thy father. But she is dead.

Duke. Your unnatural rage is dead, and the better feelings of your heart have resumed their dominion. Man is not man until his passion dies. Your daughter's frailties are dead, but still she lives, graced with every virtue, while poverty and despair are the sole companions of her fire-side.

Treb. She lives then? I am sorry that I wasted tears upon a wanton! but my handkerchief shall drink them up, and water wash out all again. Is she poor?

Duke. Trust me, she is.

Treb. 'Tis well. It should be so. 'Tis ever thus with creatures of her trade.

Duke. When did you see her last?

Treb. Seven winters have wasted away since my doors and my heart have been closed against her.

Duke. Your doors, but not your heart.

Treb. Yes, my heart, the heart she trampled on.—Nay, plead not for her. You know not what it is to be deserted by a favorite child.

Duke. To crown her woes her husband lies in jail condemned to death.

Treb. Let him hang! One half of her infamy will then be out of the world. Curse on him! 'Twas he who first taught her to taste poison.

Duke. But your daughter.

Treb. She is no longer mine.

Duke. You are now beyond all reason.

Treb. Then I am a beast. Sir, sir—I had rather be a beast and not dishonor my creation, than be a doating, fond, indulgent father, and hug vice to my bosom, because it was of my own begetting. There is one who may forgive her—I trust he will—but for me—I cannot, I cannot.

Duke. Fare you well! I will no farther touch you.

(Exit.—L. H.)

Treb. Alas, my girl! art you poor? Poverty dwells next door to despair;—but there is but a thin and broken wall between them. Poor Astrabel! I have kept thee from my heart too long; but thou hast now rushed in and filled it to the overflowing. Yes—I will go to her. Shall a silly bird peck her own breast to nourish her young, and a father see his child starve?—That were hard. The pelican does it and shall not I!—But how shall it be done?—I have it.—She shall drink of my wealth

as beggars do of the running stream by the highway, nor think of the source whence it flows.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE 2

An apartment in Adorni's house.

Enter ADORNI and CLAUDIO.—*L. H.*

Adorni. So wealthy and so beautiful, you say?

Clau. The fairest maid in Florence. Trust me, sir,
She needs no gloss that fortune can bestow
To make a king turn suitor.—Such a one,
That were another planet to be formed,
Might be transplanted to the firmament,
And outshine Venus.

Adorni. Of what age, good Claudio?

Clau. Neither a bud, nor yet a flower full blown.

Adorni. All things are beautiful!

Clau. How now, Adorni;

May not a man commend his mistress' charms
Without offence? A reigning belle, 'tis true,
Might have some cause to frown at what I've said—
But thou hast none. Shake off this peevish humour.
Thou art not jealous that my Viola
Should share my heart with thee? What ails thee, man?

Adorni. I look abroad, and all that strikes mine eye
Is beautiful. E'en things inanimate
That were created but to live a day,
And die;—the flower we tread upon
Betrays the labor of the skilful hand
That fashioned it. The sky is glorious
Passing all wonders. The birds that cleave the air,
Are beautiful in plumage and in form.
The living sea, when warring with the sky,
Making its weapons of the works of man,
That float upon its bosom, is sublime.
The countless things that grow beneath its surface,
Though made for man's use, seldom meet his eye,
Are moulded in a form to yield delight
When brought to view. The principle prevails,

In heaven, earth, air, and to the caves of ocean—
 All things are beautiful!—
 Nature has lavish'd, with unsparing hand,
 The choicest gifts upon her meanest works;—
 But, in her boundless prodigality,
 Not one has fallen here. I—I alone,
 Move through this world of vast variety,
 A species in myself—disown'd by all!—
 As 'twere a foil to set off all beside;—
 The sport of nature and the scoff of man.

Clau. Thou wrongst thyself to entertain such thoughts;—
 Nature has been to thee most prodigal.
 Thy birth is noble, and thy fortune great;
 Thy mind accomplish'd and thy taste refin'd.

Adorni. True, fortune placed me on a giddy height,
 That all might gaze and wonder, and become,
 However base, contented with their state.
 The starving beggar as he craves an alms,
 Receives it from my hands—and thanks his God,
 That he was not thus stricken and deform'd:
 Returning pity for my charity.
 My taste, you say's refined. Is that a thing
 To be rejoic'd at, since it teaches me
 The grossness of my own deformity;
 To hate myself and execrate my race?

Clau. Out on you;—this is madness.

Adorni. My mind's accomplish'd—True, with patient toil,
 I've studied night and day to make my own
 Th' accumulated wisdom of the world;
 Until the grave was gaping to receive
 My wasted carcass. Yes; my mind has been
 A fire that feeds on all within its reach,
 And then consumes itself for lack of fuel.
 But what of that! who estimates the mind
 In this base world where earth alone can prosper?
 Fools with fair forms, though sterile of all good,
 As the parch'd desert, mount upon our necks
 And are proclaim'd the master works of heav'n;
 While those who're gifted with th' ethereal spark

That lights them to explore the universe,
Are pass'd unnoticed as the senseless clod
If cursed with such deformity as mine.

Clau. All do not judge thus blindly. Thy fair wife
Gave proof of this in making choice of thee.

Ador. Yes, she gave proof of more than this when she
Made choice of me.

Clau. For shame! I blush for you.

Ador. Twelve months have scarcely passed since she was priz'd
The treasure of the court—the cheering sun
That gave new life to all that came within
Her influence. Ay, from my lady's page
E'en to the duke, there was not one but felt
Most honor'd when he had the grace to touch
Her shoe-tie. The young Duke himself ne'er met her
Without smiling and kissing his hand to her.
All eyes were turn'd upon her as she mov'd
Like some bright comet that no cloud obscures
While all the firmament is hung with mourning.
And yet, though worshipp'd thus, she fixed on me,
As if I'd been Apollo in his prime.
And why was this! say, was it natural?

Clau. Thou art resolved to prove it otherwise
By showing what thou art.

Ador. Oh! woman, woman!
Whom gownsmen sagely call the greatest good
Bestow'd on man, though ancient records tell
How thy first fatal act 'mid Eden's bloom
Entail'd damnation on the heirs of heaven;—
By what name shall I call thee!

Clau. Why this bitterness?

Ador. Because I'm married, sir.

Clau. But to a wife
As pure and spotless as the virgin snow
That falls at midnight, when the frozen moon
Has crystalliz'd the world.

Ador. Ah say you so: then thou shalt try her virtue.

Clau. Fie, fie!

Ador. Thou shalt.

Clau. Pray fool yourself no farther. Twice you've sway'd me
To this disgraceful office: Twice I've wooed her,
And by the bright unspotted cheek of truth
She is—

Ador. A woman.

Clau. Chaste as Dian's self.
A perfect crystal that betrays to view
The slightest flaw within it. Ev'ry act
Is open as the mid-day sun, to all,
And challenges the closest scrutiny.

Ador. When the dark Alisander¹ leaf looks greenest
The sap is then most bitter.

Clau. Still suspicious!

Ador. Look on me, Claudio!—Can it be possible
She loved me for myself?

Clau. Will nought convince you?

Ador. Try her again—but once more I beseech you.

Clau. On this condition, that you stand ear witness
Unto our conference.

Ador. Peace, peace, she comes.
Lovely enough to rouse your eloquence.

(Retires.—R. H.)

Enter EUGENIA.—L. H.

Eng. My husband is not here! Your pardon, sir.—
(Going)

Clau. Nay, do not shun my presence, fair Eugenia.
Oh! turn again, though from your arched brow
You pierce me with the arrows of disdain.

Eng. Have I not twice repell'd th' impetuous storm
Of thy incessant rudeness? Why again
Insult my feelings and degrade thyself,
By giving birth to thy unholy wishes?
Adorni is thy friend, and is it thus
That thou repayest him the love he bears thee?
Shame on thee, Claudio.

Clau. His cold neglect
Must plead forgiveness for my tenderness.

¹ An old form of "Alexanders."

Eug. His cold neglect! 'Tis false; he never can
Neglect the wife that lives but to adore him.
And if he should, were that sufficient cause
That she neglect herself?

Clau. Look on him, Madam,
Nature has been so niggard in her gifts
That he deserves not, surely, to engross
Thy matchless beauty.

Eug. Thou popinjay! That such a daw should peck at
And chatter of the bird that cleaves the heavens
Is monstrous. "Look on him!"—Look on thyself!
But I forbear.—My eyes were open, sir,
When I made choice of him, and I preferr'd
The strong wing'd bird of Jove, to that of Juno.
Thou'lt say 'twas strange, and wonder at my taste.
But such is it, and I shall never mend it.

Clau. He cannot love thee, Madam, as I love.—
See, on my knees—

Eug. False man, begone.
To parley longer with a wretch so base
Would lead thee to suspect I might become
The foul thing thou dost wish me. Hence, I say!

(Exit.—*L. H.*

Ador. (*Coming forward.*) She's mine, she's mine, heart and soul,
Claudio!

A shrewd tongue, faith.

Clau. Well, sir, what think you now?

Ador. The world may boast a woman strictly honest
Without the course of nature being changed;
And my fair wife, I'm fully satisfied
Would freeze e'en glowing Phoebus with a frown.

Clau. Heav'n send you keep in this mind, at least
Till the moon changes.

Ador. Ay, good Claudio;
Till the sun burns out and the stars are blotted
From the face of heaven. O, she's mine, she's mine!

Clau. A husband of the right stamp.
Well, now to see the lovely Viola,
And then, to woo and wed her.

Ador. Viola!—O, I remember now.

Was she not of the Duke's party this morning?

Clau. The fairest among them.

Ador. Then look to Lodovico and look closely;
Or rather break your chains.—A painted puppet,
As fickle as the wanton winds, that kiss
Alike the carcass and the blooming rose!

Clau. Your language is too harsh.—Though vain, imprudent—
She is most strictly virtuous.

Ador. As Caesar's wife!—Pshaw! Claudio;—
But say no more, thy folly plainly shows
The greatest curse that man can labor under
Is the strong witchcraft of a woman's eyes.

(*Exeunt.*—*R. H.*

END OF ACT I

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ACT II

SCENE 1

A chamber meanly furnished.

Enter BERALDO.—*L. H.*

Ber. At length I am in my own castle again, as free as nature made me. How light I feel. No shackles on my limbs now. The heels of Mercury are not more supple than my own.—Why Astrabel, ho! wife, where art thou?

Enter ASTRABEL.—*R. H.*

Astra. Who calls?—O, my Beraldo! O, my husband! (*Runs into his arms*) Wert thou in thy grave and art thou here again? O, welcome, welcome.

Ber. Art glad to see me, Bell?

Astra. What other joy have I on earth, Beraldo? My eyes overflow at this unlooked-for meeting.

Ber. Come, come, no tears, wife. Let us laugh and be merry. 'Tis not for us to draw a cloud before the sunshine. Cheer up, I have had enough of watery eyes in the prison. Smile, smile, wife, I have friends at court, I am free, I shall soar, I shall fly high again, fly high!

Astra. Beraldo!

Ber. Is it possible that these limbs ever danced in fetters! That this buoyant spirit was ever dampened by the atmosphere of a prison! That instead of nature's beauteous works I was doomed to behold misery and despair, and the only sound that greeted my ears the groans of the wretched, the clank of their shackles, and the grating of bolts and bars! But, that is past. I breathe pure air again, and it is to my soul as refreshing as wine, and I leap forth into the world a new born man. O, 'twas a glorious world till laws were made to curse it, and hood-winked Justice took her daily rounds to trample on the feeble.

Astra. Beraldo.

Ber. What sayest thou, sweet one?

Astra. Couldst thou not make a mirror of thy prison and therein view the unsightly scars thy name and fortunes bear.

Ber. Faith, Bell, I need no glass to see them.

Astra. Then in viewing mend them.

Ber. A plague!—Have I turned my back upon a jail for this!—Postpone thy lecture to some fitter time. Dampen not my wings now. I shall soar again. I shall fly high.—O, for the mad rogues—the roaring boys! I shall soon be among you again.

Astra. Thou dost not hear me.

Ber. Yes faith, I do.—(*Not attending to her.*) Ha! ha! Their greeting will pour new life into my veins, and the streets shall re-echo at midnight that Beraldo is no longer in prison.—I wonder how the inside of a tavern looks!

Astra. Thou knowest too well Beraldo, and too dearly hast thou paid for thy knowledge, with the loss of wealth, and time, and fair fame. O, my husband, could'st thou be content with our humble home, thou wouldst here find a friend more faithful than those who pledge themselves in drunken oaths, and praise thee for thy failings.

Ber. I do believe thee; and I protest to thee I will turn over a new leaf, but let me fly once more that I may feel that I am free. (*Knocking.*) Who's there?

Astra. Some one knocks at the door.

Ber. I will be porter. I will stand at mine own door, and let the world see that a jail cannot hold a brave spirit.

(*Exit.*—*L. H.*)

Astra. How wild is his behaviour! O, I fear, the vices that were but in the seed, have taken root and ripened in the prison. O! my poor husband!—But, come what will I must abide all storms. When with

full sail he floated along the sunny stream, he loved me, and now that the tempest has risen and his fortunes are wrecked, I'll cling unto the ruin and act the pilot until the barque goes down, and gladly will I perish with it.

Enter BERALDO and TREBATZO, the latter disguised.—L. H.

Ber. Come in I pray you. Would you speak with me, good fellow?

Treb. Is your name signor Beraldo?

Ber. My name is signor Beraldo, and the time has been I was proud of the name.

Treb. You had reason. Is this gentlewoman your wife, sir?

Ber. That gentlewoman is my wife, sir.

Treb. And you were once proud of your wife, also.

Ber. And still am, by heaven! and with greater reason than ever. Fellow, what meanest thou?

Treb. (*Aside.*) The mother's own face!—May the destinies spin a long and even thread of both your lives.—I have not forgot that face, though the beauty of her cheek hath, like the moon, suffered strange eclipses since I last beheld it.—(*Crosses to Astrabel.*) Gentlewoman, the last man I served was your father.

Astra. My father! any tongue that sounds his name speaks music to my heart. Welcome old man, thou good old man! How does my father? Has he health? does he think of me? does he speak of me? but alas! I have so much shamed him, so deeply wounded him, that I scarce dare speak the tender name of father.

Treb. I can speak no more.

Ber. How now, old lad, what—dost cry?

Astra. This is strange.

Treb. I am troubled with weak eyes, nought else. O, sir, I am a merry old fellow, but for these weak eyes.

Ber. No matter. Let them weep themselves away an they will, for at thy time of life, thou canst see but little in this world worth looking after.

Treb. True, true, and that little makes them weep the more.—Signor, I have a suit to you.

Ber. Well, what is it, grey beard?

Treb. I have a mind to serve your worship.

Ber. To serve me! Good fellow, I do not think that will serve your purpose. Not that I am above being served; not so, but truly

my fortune is somewhat like my garment, out at elbows. What is thy name?

Treb. Pacheco.

Ber. I have seen the time I could have entertained you—the time may come again—but now—even the plucked eagle must crawl, Pacheco.

Treb. Look you, signor, you think I want money. 'Tis not so. True, I am old, and know, that when all other sins are crippled within us and hobble upon crutches, covetousness is then but in her youthful lustihood. But 'tis not so with me. My white head is no inn for such a gossip. I do not want money, sir, thanks to my old master; though we did fall out at last, I would do him justice.

Astra. Didst love thy master!

Treb. As myself, lady, and for the love I bear him I wish to serve you until such time as he shall be reconciled.

Ber. Damnation! The love you bear Trebatzo is no passport to cross my door. Begone!

Astra. Beraldo, look at his grey hairs.—Remember he is poor and friendless.

Ber. Right, my gentle Bell. Pacheco, stay.

Treb. Though friendless, I have some gold saved from my former service, which I would put in your worship's hands.

Ber. Ha, gold!—A good old fellow, faith! Thou shalt serve me, and as for your money—

Astra. Do not take it. Load not the back already broken; take not the crutch from the decrepid.

Ber. Never fear, Bell. Thou knowest me better.

Treb. Look you, Sir, here it is—some twenty pieces.

(Draws out purse.)

Ber. Keep it thyself, then thou art sure it's safe.

Treb. Safe! an' it were ten thousand ducats, your worship should be my cash keeper. *(Gives him the purse.)* I have had a greater treasure in as bad hands.—*(Looking at Astrabel.)*

Ber. You force me to it; but thy money shall breed, Pacheco—it shall not be idle.—And so my father-in-law turned you out of doors.—And thinkest thou he will receive you again?

Treb. Most certain.

Ber. Thou credulous old man!—Not on this side the grave. Would he were there.

Astra. O! Say not so, Beraldo! Kind heaven preserve his life and mine, until I again deserve, and receive his blessing.

(TREBATZO turns away and wipes his eyes.)

Ber. His blessings!—An unforgiving, unfeeling villain! as proud as Lucifer and merciless as hell. We may expect the devil to turn monk, when he bestows a blessing.

Astra. For shame! This from you, Beraldo?

Treb. Thou speakest the truth, else he would not suffer his own child to pine away in want, exposed to all the temptations that are thrown in the pathway of the wretched. He is, indeed, an unrelenting scoundrel.

Astra. Thou villain, curb thy licentious tongue. Is this the love thou bearest thy master?—Out, thou dissembling Judas.

Ber. He speaks the truth. Thy father is—

Astra. (Interrupting him.) All that a father should be—at least, to such a child as I have been.

Treb. Mine own girl yet. (*Aside.*)

Astra. (*To BERALDO.*) Art not ashamed to strike an absent man? Art not ashamed to let this vile dog bark and bite my father thus?—I will not bear it.—(*To TREBATZO.*) Out of my doors, base slave.

Ber. Thy doors!—Come hither, Pacheco. Heed not her anger, it is me thou serv'st. Come hither.—Call you him a father that deserts his child, and for the first fault too? And look you, such a child, as earth cannot produce her paragon!—Out on such fathers! (*Exit.*—*R. H.*)

Astra. Ah! me! how is my poor heart shook and torn with passion. (*Sees TREBATZO.*) How now, sir!

Treb. This is strange, mistress! Does my master often dye your brow of this sad color?

Astra. Fellow, begone, for thou art as a spider in my eye, swol'n with rank poison. To wrong men absent is to spurn the dead—and so didst thou, thy aged master—my honored father.

Treb. Thou hast but little reason to take his part. He has deserted thee.

Astra. 'Tis false! 'twas I deserted him!

Treb. He says you are a—

Astra. Let him say what he will—he is my father.

Treb. And dost thou not return his railings?

Astra. Yes—with blessings. How else should an offending child return a father's railings. When for the earth's offence, heaven's fiery bolts are driven downward through the marbled vault, is it fit

repentant earth should shoot again those darts against high heaven?

Treb. She carries mine own mind, my flesh, my blood, my bone. (*Aside.*) In truth, mistress, the squibs that I threw against my good old master, were but to try how your husband loved such crackers; but it's well known by those who know me, that I love your father as myself. Say then thou wilt forgive me.

Astra. O, he that loves my father, need not fear resentment in this bosom. That virtue quenches it.

Treb. Mine own girl still. (*Aside.*)

Astra. O! that my father knew me, and all that I've endured—knew my heart and all its thoughts, and all its longings! He then would know, that though a star may shoot, it cannot fall.

(*Exit.*—*R. H.*

Treb. He shall know it—he does know it. Bless you, God bless you!

(*Exit.*—*L. H.*

SCENE 2

The street before Viola's house.

Enter BERALDO.—*R. H.*

Ber. How nimbly the air plays! How refreshing! I feel as if I could leap from my skin with joy. What a bright world it is we live in! and how few make the discovery until they have lost sight of it. How happy all things appear, and I among the happiest, though not worth the scrapings of a beggar's wallet. But still I can walk abroad and dance without being tripped by my shackles; and there's much in that, to a man who has passed his probation in prison. Ha! here comes one of the roaring boys—a fellow who will reap the enjoyment of ten lives, while your plodder is studying to find out what there is worth living for.

Enter LODOVICO.—*L. H.*

Ha! mad rogue, by this hand I'm glad to see thee.

Lodo. Thou art familiar, fellow, stand aside.

Ber. Ha! how is this! have I so soon grown out of your remembrance?

Lodo. So soon! I have not seen a doublet of that cut these ten years.

Ber. Look on me well, Lodovico. True, they have clipped my

wings, but there is that within, tells me I shall fly high again.

Lodo. Beraldo, by this light.

Ber. Ay; your old friend, and sound at core as ever.

Lodo. Thou'rt welcome to fresh air again. I' faith thou'rt welcome.

Ber. Fresh air is now my only heritage, but 'tis a blessed and a peerless one. Didst ever breathe the foul air of a prison?

Lodo. Never.

Ber. Then die on a dunghill first. O, damn the jail! Shun it as a pestilence! Damn the jail!

Lodo. Amen, with all my heart. How is thy fortune now?

Ber. In truth, so beggarly that if 'twere not for the boundless joy I feel in viewing the glorious works that the master hand has scattered, I should sicken, even to death, Lodovico, in my collision with my fellow man. But no matter—tell me, stand the gaming houses and taverns in the old quarter, and the bona robas,² boy, do they look as fresh and blooming as ever?

Lodo. When the paint is fresh put on they are much the same, but like old houses, they require constant repair to look well. We shall meet again.

Ber. Whither in such haste?

Lodo. The old sport, Beraldo. This shell contains the brightest pearl in Florence (*Pointing to the house*) and I must dive after it.

Ber. Dive! that's not the true way to win her.

Lodo. How then mad rogue?

Ber. Fly high, fly high, and leave diving to leaden spirits. In, in and prosper.

(Exit LODOVICO into the house.—R. H.)

More gallants coming and their cloaks of the court fashion too! This is life now!—such once was I! but now! no matter; I shall yet be new fledged and bear up again.

Enter ADORNI and CLAUDIO.—L. H.

Ador. You are resolved to see her!

Clau. Once again.

Ador. But once!—how often have you sworn that once should be the last?

Clau. In truth I've kept no calendar but daily I think for six months. Do not laugh.

² Courtesans.

Ador. Well follow thy own wishes.

(CLAUDIO *knocks*.)

Ber. Ha! Signor Adorni! Give me welcome brother; I am among you again. How does thy fair wife *my* sister? To the quick! You see I am not unmindful of kindred ties though while I lay in prison your hearts were too tender to witness the sorrows of poor Astrabel and therefore you kept aloof from her. Kind souls!

Ador. Out prodigal!

Ber. Nay, incubus, turn not thy proud back on me, though thy face be enough to make a dog bark to look upon, I can brook its fierceness—never fear. And this is old Trebatzo's favourite! Ha! ha!

Ador. Scum of the earth, you are beneath my notice.

Ber. Fly high Adorni! at thy old tricks still! Bear up, and fly high. Ha! ha! ha!

Ador. (*Walks up to CLAUDIO who is still knocking at VIOLA'S door.*) Knock louder, Claudio, you are not heard. (*Sarcastically.*)

Clau. She knows my knock, and will not let me enter.

Ador. Never give over man: knock, knock again. Perhaps she does not hear.—(*Laughing.*)

Clau. The plague light on her.

Enter LODOVICO from the house.—R. H.

Lodo. You are too noisy, sir, and have mistaken the house.

Clau. Pish, I could find it blindfold. You are the new lackey, I presume, and know not yet your duty. Lead the way; thou'rt young enough to learn.

Lodo. And old enough to teach you better manners. (*Draws.*)

Clau. Have at you for a lesson then. (*Draws.*)

VIOLA appears at the window.

Viola. As you are gentleman, I beg you hold.

This brawl will ruin me. Good Claudio—

Adorni—hear me—gentlemen.

Ber. Put up your spits boys, this is not the place
For such amusement. Fie; put up your spits;
The lady is alarmed.

Clau. We'll find a time.

Lodo. Pray name it, lest your courage should grow cold.

Clau. No time is like the present, and the place
Beyond the eastern gate. (*Viola retires.*)

Lodo. We there shall meet then.

Ber. This is life, my little man of mettle! It makes the blood stir, and tells us we are not made of wood and stone. O! Lodovico! I now feel that I live again. Bear up, boy, and fly high, fly high.

(Exeunt LODOVICO and BERALDO.—R. H.)

Clau. Go on Adorni to the place of meeting,
I will but change my rapier and then follow:
I dare not trust the temper of this blade.

Ador. A pleasant visit this, sir, to your mistress!

Clau. For ever cynical!

Ador. Invite her to the field,
That she may see how gracefully you fight
To win a prize so treasur'd.

Clau. Trifler away, I'll presently o'ertake you.

(Exit ADORNI.—L. H.)

Enter VIOLA from the house.

Viola. Claudio.

Clau. Who calls?

Viola. She who was not wont
To call that name a second time. How now?

Clau. I've been your dupe too long; at length the net
That folly wove around me is destroy'd,
And thou, false siren, now mayest sing thy strains
For other ears.

Viola. Can this be Claudio?

Clau. You well may question it.

Viola. Out on that frown, it ill becomes your brow,
And spoils its beauty. Let me smooth it pray.

Clau. 'Tis not within thy power. Give over trifling.

Viola. Thou art resolved then thus to scowl through life,
And look as fierce as Hector before Troy?

Clau. I am resolved to be thy fool no longer,
For thou hast ceased to be my Viola,
The modest, the immaculate; and some devil
Has ta'en the form of that unblemish'd beauty,
To do a fearful mischief.

Viola. I also

Have been deceiv'd; thou'rt not the man I thought thee.

Clau. In what, pray, am I changed?

Viola. I did suppose the gallant Claudio
Would have defied the devil and all his works,
But lo! he's frighten'd at a petticoat,
And dreads the witchcraft in it. Is this manly?

Clau. Have I not cause?

Viola. Why none that I'm aware of.
My garment is quite harmless, I assure you.

Clau. Lodovico!

Viola. Why this is worse and worse!
It is a man then who has roused your fears,
And not a devil in a female shape?
And such a man too!—Now, upon my life,
If this strange temper holds, I soon shall hear
That thou art jealous of my waiting maid
For pinning of my kerchief.

Clau. Faith I should be
If that same maid were dress'd in hose and doublet.

Viola. Yet, as she is, thou hast as much to dread
From her as from Lodovico.—For shame!
Art yet to learn, that there are human things
That were intended for no earthly use
But to cut capers at a lady's elbow,
Dangle her fan, sometimes draw off her glove,
And run her various errands that are deem'd
Too trifling for a lackey to attend to?—
And whose ambition never soars above
Holding her farthingale on holidays,
To keep it from the dust!—Out on thee, sir!
Jealous of such a thing! Thou'lt next become
Jealous of my lap dog.

Clau. I've been to blame.
Say, can you pardon me?

Viola. Perhaps I may,
Provided thou wilt let me smooth that brow,
Nor call my power in question.

Clau. O Viola!
Had I less faith than e'en a heathen hath,
I could not doubt it.

Viola. So, thy note is changing!—

But saidst thou not, thou wert resolved to be
My fool no longer?

Clau. Said I so? Impossible!—

As long as I may be a fool with thee
I envy not philosophers their wisdom.

Viola. I thought you would recant. Come in a moment,
I've much to say. You hesitate! I see how 'tis!
You fear some devil has assum'd my form,
Or that there's witchcraft in my petticoat.
Dismiss those fears, for trust me, Claudio,
Whate'er you think, I'm still thy Viola—
You will not come then?

Clau. Though thou wert the devil,
In that fair form, thus tempted, for my soul,
I could not do otherwise than follow thee.

(Exeunt into the house.)

SCENE 3

A garden attached to Adorni's house.

Enter EUGENIA.—*R. H.*

Eug. What can detain my husband from his home!
'Twas morning when he left me, and the clock
Has told the hour of four, and yet he comes not.
I languish in his absence, and I feel
How cheerless life would be but for his love.

Enter CLAUDIO.—*L. H.*

Clau. Not yet return'd, and no where to be found!
My mind is on the rack. The time is past.
They must have fought. How has Adorni sped!
That thought will drive me frantic. Fool, O, fool!
Must I forever be the dupe of woman;
Forfeit my honour for a rosy lip,
And dream of bliss e'en while the valued life
Of my best friend's at stake!—*(Seeing Eugenia.)*
I do beseech you.—

Eug. What, here again! Where is your sense of shame?

Clau. I seek your husband, lady.

Eug. He's from home,
And 'till he does return pray seek him elsewhere. (*Going.*

Clau. I cannot bear the weight of thy displeasure,
And at this time when I have sunk beneath
My own esteem, thy sharp reproofs are venom'd.
Believe me when I swear by truth itself,
And by the honour of unblemish'd man,
The folly that offended thy chaste ear
Was but a trial of thy saint like virtue.

Eug. And wherefore? Speak.

Clau. Your husband.

Eug. Ah! what of him?

Clau. I fear I've gone too far. Your pardon, lady.
I wish but to regain your fair opinion.
Believe me, I'm your friend.

Eug. I see it all!
Adorni doubts my truth, and from his doubts
Arose this guilty trial. Wretched man!
He little knows the grief and suffering
His folly causes.

Clau. Grieve not injured one;
I know his nature, and I shall not fail
In rooting up this hemlock from his heart
That poisons all thy peace.

Eug. No more of that;—
I ne'er complain'd of his harsh treatment, sir,
Nor should a sigh e'en now have scap'd my lips,
But that I know you share his inmost thoughts.
He is my husband, and with him, my love
Alone must plead my cause; another tongue
Would speak but gall to poison all our hopes,
And make the breach more deadly. Promise, sir,
Thou wilt not breathe a single word between us,
Lest it disturb his peace and taint my fame.

*Enter ADORNI, LODOVICO, and BERALDO behind.—L. H.—They pause
on seeing the characters in front.*

Clau. My honor and my hand upon it lady.
Excuse me if I swear by this fair book.

(*Kisses her hand.*

Ador. Ha! so close! poison of toads betwixt ye.

Clau. Command me as you list, for I'll devote
My life unto your service.

(Kisses her hand and exit.—L. H.

Ador. *(rushes forward.)* Traitor, libidinous traitor!
Was it for this he shunn'd the fight? O! devil!—
Was it for this!—unhand me, gentlemen;
I'll tear him piecemeal! Off—I'll have his heart—
His treacherous heart. O, that these bony hands
Were clutch'd around his heart.

(Sinks into their arms exhausted.

Lodo. What means all this?

Ber. Thou hast lived at court to little purpose, not to understand
natural philosophy, such as is taught in the shambles. Nothing more.

Eug. My noble lord.

Ador. Hence from my sight, thou venom to my eyes!
Would I could look thee dead, or with a frown
Might crush thy prostituted form to atoms,
That the four winds might hurl them through the world
And spread disease that kills whate'er it touches.

Ber. Nay, bear your wrongs, sir, with more fortitude.

Ador. She was unspotted as an angel's garment—
But now begrim'd and foul.—O! God! O! God!—
He that depends on woman, steers in a
Stormy night without a compass.—Look there!—
That guilt so damnable should lurk beneath
A look so innocent! Look there! Look there!

Eug. Alas! Adorni, has it come to this!—*(Swoons.*

Lodo. Look to the lady.

Ador. Hang her, let her die,
With all her countless sins upon her head.

Ber. You are too violent. Bear her gently in.

(Exit LODOVICO supporting EUGENIA.—L. H.

And there's Trebatzo's pride! The milk white dove
Whose presence made my Astrabel a raven!—
Ha! ha! ha! What a blind world it is! A fine world faith,
For drabs and knaves to dance in. 'Tis but to hide
The cloven foot and devils pass for angels!

Ador. Where is the viper!—Give him to my rage—
The pois'nous reptile with the painted skin

That crept into my bosom.—Where is he?—
O! that my heel were now upon his head,
I'd crush, and prove, the ancient enmity
'Twixt man and serpent is not yet extinct.—
Serpent! damned serpent!

Exeunt.—L. H.

SCENE 4

An apartment in Beraldo's house.

Enter TREBATZO and ASTRABEL.

Treb. Can you not sing that strain again, lady? Its melancholy soothed me.

Astra. My heart is out of tune, Pacheco. O! my sister! unhappy sister!

Treb. Waste not thy breath in naming her. Think not of her, lady. A wanton! Cast her off! Forget her! Would I could do the same.

Astra. Shame on thee, old man, to speak thus of thy master's daughter.—O! my father! I smote thee to the heart, but she was thy favourite child, and her falling off, I fear, will go nigh to kill thee.

Treb. Thou speakest truly; it does go nigh to kill him.

Enter BERALDO.—L. H.

Ber. What infernal stuff are these dice made of! Of the parings of the devil's corns, I think, that they run thus damnably. If any handicraft man is ever suffered to keep shop in hell, it will be a dice maker, for he is able to undo more souls than Lucifer himself. Ah! my gentle Bell, how dost thou?

Astra. Sad, sad, Beraldo.

Ber. Nay, hang sorrow. Have you any money?

Astra. Alas! I have none.

Ber. Must have money, Bell; must have money. Must have a new cloak and rapier, and things fitting a gentleman. Do you hear, wench, shall I walk like a rogue, in my hose and doublet, and a crabtree cudgel in my hand, and you swim in your silks and satins. 'Twould never do, Bell! Must have money.

Treb. Why sir, you would not sell the gown from your wife's back?

Ber. O! its summer, its summer, white pate, and your only fashion for a woman, now, is to be light, to be light. I still have an eye to the

fashion of the court, though no longer admitted there. Ask Adorni's wife whether I speak not to the letter. O! there's a dainty dish for the devil to dine off.

Astra. Nay, Beraldo, lend not your tongue to scoff at her; there will be enough ready to do that office.

Ber. True, true, my gentle Bell! we found them ever ready. There is as much rejoicing in this world upon the falling off of a sinner, as we are told there is in the next over his repentance.

Treb. Blame not the world, but the sinner.

Ber. Damn the world, damn the world!—a painted carcass—a fair outside while it breeds corruption within! Look there, Pacheco. (*pointing to Astrabel,*) for one fault—and that a venial error, have the avenues to mercy in this world been barred up, and though fit to hold converse with the sainted, she is pronounced too impure even to be looked upon, by the fly blown immaculates, as rank as carrion itself. Damn the world, damn the world.

Astra. Nay Beraldo, fly not out thus.

Ber. And what have I done, that a mark should be put upon my front to caution those who regard the world's opinion to shun me? I was once followed, and sought after, and the proudest were proud to be seen with me. But now, a consuming leprosy could not keep them at greater distance. And why is this? I walk abroad, and I see them cross the streets as I approach, affecting not to see me. Though I despise them, I cannot but feel this slight. A stone would feel it; however, I show no more feeling than a stone.

Treb. The right stuff!—the right stuff!

Ber. The ways of honest livelihood are closed against me, and there is nothing for me to hope from my fellow man. By heaven! it requires but little more to make me cast off all restraint—but little more, and I leap the wall and play such wild pranks on t'other side, as shall make the world stare. I am desperate.

Astra. Speak not thus wildly.

Ber. How now, in tears Bell! come, dry your eyes, I have caused you to shed too many. But for me your life had been all sunshine.

Astra. Think not of that.

Ber. I do think of it; I must think of it; and then to see to what I have reduced you!—Beggary and shame!—The being I once adored. Damn the world! Damn the world!—still say I.

Astra. Beraldo! no more, no more!

Ber. And old Trebatzo!—to suffer his unoffending child to live thus—exposed to contumely—to sicken for want of bread—the only one to solace her broken heart, a profligate, a vagabond. And yet such a father can lay his head on his pillow, and sleep o' nights, and ere he closes his eyes, ask for mercy. How dare he open his lips to ask for mercy?

Treb. O! Beraldo!

Ber. What sayest thou?

Treb. How dare he open his lips to ask for mercy?

Ber. Thou little knowest, old man, what I've endured. We had a child, the link that bound my better feelings to that injured one. That child was to us as a star at midnight. O! how brightly it shone, but only for a season, and then disappeared.

Astra. Beraldo, recall not the memory of those sorrows.

Ber. It fell sick and died for the want of those comforts which her unforgiving father lavishes on his hounds. I beheld it wasting away, day by day, and yet had not the means to check the disease. When its sufferings were over, we were alone—no friend came near us; and on the third day after, I suppressed my grief, went forth into the street, and begged the means of purchasing it a grave.

Treb. Gracious Heaven! I knew not this. (*Aside.*

Ber. The poor thing was a stranger in this world, and he had a stranger's burial. His parents were his only mourners. No hymn was chanted, and no mass was said. It was night as we returned. We passed in front of her father's palace; it was illuminated, and the sounds of revelry were heard from within. We stood for a moment and listened to their merriment.—The feelings of that moment I shall carry to the grave! I pressed that mourner to my broken heart, and we silently returned to our deserted home.

Astra. O! my husband!

Ber. Wipe away thy tears, Bell; dry thine eyes, we shall yet bear up and fly high, in spite of the world. But brush my cloak and fix my ruff, wench, for I must to the senate house, and thou wouldst not have me appear otherwise than as a gentleman in such a place.

Astra. To the senate house?

Ber. Ay; thou hast heard that Adorni sues to be divorced from your sister, and I am called upon to testify to what I know.

Astra. And what dost thou know?

Ber. That Vulcan's wife might have passed for Dian had she been prudent. Come along Pacheco; thou wilt be present for thy old master's sake.

Treb. For my own sake, I would fain be absent.

Ber. Come along. Rare sport for old Trebatzo. Ha! old lad!

Astra. Remember, she is my sister.

Ber. Years have elapsed since she ceased to remember it.—Come, come, Pacheco. (*Exeunt.*)

END OF ACT II

ACT III

SCENE 1

The Senate Chamber.

The DUKE and Senators, ADORNI, CLAUDIO, LODOVICO, BERALDO, TREBATZO, still disguised, EUGENIA and spectators, discovered.

Duke. Call the accused to the bar.

Clau. We appear with reverence to the presence.

Duke. Signor Adorni, you have leave to speak.

Ador. I stand before you, sir, o'erwhelm'd with shame,
To tell the world how lowly I am fallen;
A thing for apes to gibe at.—I affirm—
Nay, the great multitude without can witness,
That since my fatal marriage with that frail one,
My love expanded to such boundless height,
That malice could not reach it.—I entreat
Your patience. Sorrow chokes my utterance.

Ber. He bears it heavily.

Treb. The shaft's in his heart.

Ador. And for this man—this false and erring man!
The friendship that I bore him was proverbial.
So far my blindfold confidence extended,
That in himself I was identified,
And felt more pride when honor crown'd his brows
Than had its laurel'd wreath encircl'd mine.

Duke. And what from this infer you?

Ador. That 'twas base—

Base in the depth of baseness, for this friend
So honor'd, and this frail one, so lov'd,
To work my ruin.

Eug. O, my husband! O!

Ador. And at a time my weapon was engaged
To save his honor, he was killing mine
He fixed a quarrel on me for his purpose;
And then, O! shame to manhood! stole away,
Leaving his name and my life in the hands
Of those he'd basely wrong'd.

Clau. Hear me, great sir.
Must I with patience bear this bold-faced insult—
Have my fair name traduc'd before the world,
Without as much of reason as we find
In the wild ravings of a lunatic?

Duke. The proof, my lord, the proof.

Ador. I will appeal to signor Lodovico;
Beraldo, too.

Duke. We wait your testimony.

Lod. It grieves me much that I am call'd upon
To speak against the gallant Claudio.
But yesterday, for some imagin'd wrong,
He challeng'd me to mortal fight, yet came not.
We staid beyond the hour, and still he came not.
Believing some mistake, of time or place,
The cause of this strange bearing in a man
Noted for true courage, we sought him at
The Count Adorni's house. We enter'd hastily—
I would I had been absent—and surpris'd
The parties, here accus'd, in close discourse;
Their palms were knit together.

Duke. Well, what passed?

Lod. I saw him press her hand unto his lips;
No more than this.

Ador. No more! As this were nothing!
A kiss in private, and no harm intended!
Is it in nature? If their thoughts were pure,
Why thus in secret did he steal a joy
The public eye would scowl at? No, my lord,
The burning kiss of shame was printed on her,
Though that dull clod pronounces it a trifle.
I speak not now in passion, but to men—
To upright and to honorable men,

And put the question home to all who hear me.
Is there among you one, can make my wrongs
His own, and say, the charge preferr'd is groundless?
One, would have lock'd suspicion in his heart
And sat him down content, until his shame
Shone on his forehead? If there be, good Heavens!
I'd rather be a creature born to bear
The worst oppression man could heap upon me
Than share the nature of a thing so base.
No more than this!

Ber. That argument comes home.

This will be wormwood, boy, to old Trebatzo.

Treb. Bitter, ay, bitter as the aloe tree.

Duke. And what say'st thou, Beraldo?

Ber. How now, grey beard—?(*To Trebatzo, apart.*)

Treb. She is the sister of thy injured wife;
And though her wretched father's darling child,
Let not thy malice aim a blow at him
By crushing her. Remember! (*Apert.*)

Ber. Yes, I do (*Pointing above.*)

And, wild as I have been, have ne'er forgotten.
I can fly high, old man, but swerve not from
The path of truth.

Treb. Is this the man I spurn'd! (*Aside.*)

Duke. Say on, Beraldo.

Ber. I do avouch what Lodovico depos'd,
And nothing more.

Treb. I breathe again.

Clau. If 'twere not waste of breath for one accus'd
To speak in his defence—for all eyes view
In the same light th' accus'd and criminal!
I would beseech permission to address
Your grace and the senate.

Duke. 'Tis freely granted.

Clau. With deference to the presence, I acknowledge
The favor granted, and your patience crave
While I a plain and simple tale relate,
Which you will credit for that wrong'd one's sake.
'Tis true, this jealous man was once my friend,
And did exalt me in his fair opinion;

And I look'd on him as the greatest good
That fortune gave me.—
'Tis also true, that to his valiant sword
My honor and his life were yesterday
Most wantonly entrusted. I confess it.
But that I shunn'd the meeting purposely,
From cowardice, or to endanger him,
I trust there is not one among my hearers,
So base as to imagine—but the cause!
'Tis now of little moment to relate
The arts made use of to detain me from
The meeting where my reputation bled
To death. 'Tis past! on that score I am silent.
But that I ever wrong'd Adorni's honor,
Or that the love I bear his injur'd wife
Is such a brother's bosom need recoil from,
I do deny; proclaim aloud 'tis false,
With such a voice that all the earth may hear,
And heaven itself re-echo, innocent!

Duke. You are too bold.

Clau. Not more so than becomes me.

I feel my wrongs, and as an injur'd man
Give my soul vent.

Ber. Bear up and fly high, boy,
Though they load thy back to breaking!

Clau. Adorni, if thy cheeks are not of brass,
Unchangeable as marble, hide thy face,
While I proclaim thy folly to the world.
I here am put to trial for a crime
That owes its birth to thy distemper'd mind,
Which has been fed on jealousy, till grown
So sickly, that e'en shadows vanquish it.
Since thou wilt have it so, I here confess
That I have woo'd thy wife.

Ador. He doth confess.

Duke. How say you—woo'd her?

Clau. Yes, three several times.

Ber. The truth is coming.

Clau. At his bidding, sir.

Ber. Ha! mark you that?

Treb. I do.

Clau. And for the sake of friendship, ill-requited,
Endur'd the censure of insulted virtue.
Now, upon this, his jealousy infers
I could not hold the chalice to my lips,
But I must drink the poison.

Duke. Frail excuse!

And most improbable. Your witnesses.

Clau. The case is such as could admit of none.

Ador. Ha! ha! ha!

Duke. What farther wouldst thou urge, count Claudio?

Clau. Nothing.

Duke. And you, unhappy lady?

Eug. Why should I speak, since even he forsakes me.

(*Pointing to Adorni.*)

Duke. In that we are the kinsman of Adorni,
And still retain a sense of deep regard
For that fair being—

Ador. Blisters on his tongue!

Duke. That we may not appear in judgment partial,
The senate will decide upon the case.

Ber. You tremble.

Treb. I am old and feeble!

Clau. (*To Adorni.*) Thou weak, misguided man,
Behold her tears, each one of which would grace
A monarch's funeral; and these are shed—
Doth not the knowledge melt thee—for thy lost virtue.

(*Pointing at EUGENIA.*)

Duke. There is but one opinion in the senate:
The accus'd are guilty.

Ador. Ha! ha! ha!

Eug. 'Tis done.

Treb. Break! break! break!

Ber. Bear up, Pacheco, or I shall weep too. But why should I
weep for the shame of others? Rather rejoice!

Ador. Ha! ha! ha!

Ber. Hear the damned hedgehog!—
Thou good old man, thou sheddest far more tears
Than e'er her flinty-hearted father shed
For Astrabel.

Treb. Less, less, but they're more bitter.

Duke. Stand forth, Count Claudio. 'Tis thus decreed:
In that you have thus grossly, sir, dishonor'd
Even our blood itself, the law inflicts
The punishment of death upon your trespass;
But by your worth, of more antiquity,
That death is blotted out, and in its place
Banishment writ; perpetual banishment.
And further, if within our city's precincts,
After the setting of yon glorious sun,
Thou shalt be seen, thy head is forfeited.

Claudio. Down to the earth I thank the clemency
That gives me life and injuries enough
To make me curse the wisdom of the senate.
And so farewell. Farewell, my noble Lords!
Ere I depart I'll leave a legacy
Not to be found among the rarest treasures
That decorate this hall. I mean, the truth!
Ye are, 'tis said, the delegates of Justice,
And wear her sacred form; and so ye do!
Justice is blind—therein the likeness holds:
Justice is deaf—ye are not prone to hear:
And Justice bids th' uplifted sword to strike,
And so do ye; for were a saint, in all
His glory crown'd, brought to this bar, accus'd,
He'd seem'd begrim'd unto his judges' eyes;
Ye'd close each narrow passage to your hearts;
Without remorse command the sword to strike,
Nor heed the shriek of Mercy as it fell.
And so farewell to Justice and to Florence.

(Exit.—L. H.)

Duke. Unto you, madam.—As your husband sues
To be divorced, we deem it right to grant it.
Your rank and seeming sorrow shall prevent
All other punishment.

Eug. I bow to your decree. Farewell, Adorni,
And may thy days be fruitful in delights
As Eden in choice flowers. I ask but this—
When my fair name is thrown among the crowd,

Stain'd with the poison of corrupted minds,
 Give me a sigh, and struggle to forget
 That this fond heart ne'er harbour'd yet a thought
 Unworthy of the matchless love it bore you.

(*Crosses to TREBATZO.*)

Duke. Break up the court.

(*Exit DUKE, senators and spectators.—R. H.*)

Ador. Break up my heart—the storm is in my bosom.

Eug. (*Recognizing her father.*) Ah! what means this!

Treb. I could not stay away, yet would not be the gaze of the common herd. O! Eugenia! thou wast the child of mine age! my soul's darling! and thou hast brought my grey hairs with shame and sorrow to the grave.

Eug. My father!

Treb. Breathe not that name!—not here—not here; go on, I'll follow you.

Exit L. H.—EUGENIA following.

Ber. Ha! why standest thou there like the Nazarite of old, who, to crush his foes, dragged down ruin on himself! Ho! awake! Beraldo calls! He whom thou has scoffed at in thy pride, calls on thee to join with him and damn the world; for now thou canst feel how the scorn of thy fellow beings gnaws at the soul. Ho! Adorni. Think of poor Astrabel, whom thou has slighted as a common harlot, and then think of thy own wife. Thou spider-venomous toad, I know has mingled wormwood with old Trebatzo's bitter hate for me; but I forgive thee, for thou hast mixed a more bitter cup for thy own lips, and hast already quaffed it. Remember, none fly so high but the curse of the world may reach them. (*Exit.—L. H.*)

Adorni. How still it is! still as the grave! all gone!

No human being near me! all desert

Th' accurst of heav'n! The fearful bolt hath fallen.

The only link that bound me to my race

Is riven; the only one that smiled on me

Will smile no more. She loved me once!—

God knows she loved me once; the only one

That ever loved but she that bore me;

For e'en my father in the pride of manhood

Turn'd from me, and my brothers look'd upon me

With feelings of compassion, not of love,

As I had been a creature that partook

But partly of their nature, and beneath them;
Still, having claim upon their better feelings,
They gave me pity—all their hearts could give.
Their hate I might have borne, but not their pity!—
O! why was I created! but to be
The persecuted both of God and man!
E'en when my load of misery was lightest
It was enough to crush a giant's strength;
But now!—what am I now?—so fallen!—so debas'd,
Both in my own opinion and the world's,
That there is not a grade of abjectness
Beneath the state I've reached; and I must live,
Beyond the power of human remedy—
Despising and despised.

(*Exit.*—*L. H.*

SCENE 2

The street before Viola's house.—Stage dark.

Enter CLAUDIO.—*L. H.*

Clau. The leaden foot of time steals on apace;
Ere this I should have pass'd the gates of Florence,
And breath'd my parting curse; but Viola,
Belov'd! I'll hear the sound of thy sweet voice
Once more, and then commence my wanderings.
Light of my life, awake.

(*Window opens, and* VIOLA *appears.*)

Viola. Who calls?

Clau. A wretch whose love is hopeless as his fortunes.

Viola. That voice! Is't Claudio?

Clau. Thanks, kind lady;
You recognize me in my abjectness.
Bereft of fortune and my fair name branded;
An exile from my country and my friends,
Yet you still know me.

Viola. Report has been too busy with thy name,
But the base slander gains no credit here,
I mourn thy exile, for the punishment,
I feel, is undeserved.

Clau. Thy fair opinion gives new hope to life.

Viola. Then cherish it.

Clau. Doubt not, sweet Viola.

The veriest wretch that labors at the oar,
While one faint spark of abject life remains,
Will dream of hope, and in his baseless vision
See many years of happiness behind.

Then, should heaven's voice command him live and hope,
'Twere impious not to yield obedient.

Viola. Farewell, my prayers attend thee.

Clau. Hear me yet.

Viola. I dare not. Every moment you remain
Is full of danger. Hark! some one approaches.

VIOLA closes the window.

Enter ADORNI.—L. H.

Ador. My home is hell to me. I cannot rest
Had th' angel of destruction swept over it,
'Twould not have been more desolate than now.
When the old father of our race was scourg'd
From paradise, his Eve went with him, and
Where'er they rested, they their Eden made.
But I am driven forth alone, as Cain
Was driven; mark'd, pointed at, proscrib'd!
No paradise for me! My Eve is with the serpent.

Clau. Adorni here!

Ador. Ha!—We meet again. One joy is still remaining.
The bolt has stricken this decrepid³ form,
But I am not the only one it sears.
Thank heaven! I shall die laughing yet.

Clau. What mean you?

Ador. Vengeance, vengeance, vengeance!—Ay,
As deep and direful as my wrongs have been.
Think not the calculating rule of man
Can take from me the right of punishment,
And in itself redress my injuries.
No: I alone can judge of what is due
To honor trampled on, and peace destroy'd.
The law has had its course, and I'll have mine.

³ decrepit.

I am the judge, and I the executioner

(*Draws.*)

Clau. You will not murder me!

Ador. Not murder—sacrifice!

Draw and defend thyself, or die the death
Of a coward. Speak not, but draw.

Clau. As against a madman.

(*Draws.*)

Ador. Have at thy heart. (*Attacks him furiously. Fight for some time, when ADORNI is disarmed.*)

Ador. Curse on my sinewless arm,
Worthy the blighted trunk from which it hangs.
Has it come to this!—Debas'd and trodden on,
And yet too feeble to avenge my wrongs!
Curs'd be the hour that gave this body being!
Even the toad his poison will exude,
If spurn'd, while I, a worm without a sting,
Must vent my rage in cursing.

Clau. There's thy sword,
And with it all the scorn a thing so low
Can merit.

Ador. Ha! shall he escape in triumph,
And add fresh insult to my injuries!
'Tis night, and still he lingers here.—That thought!
I have it now. Ha, ha! The bird is in the toils.

Clau. What guilty thought delights thy canker'd mind?

Ador. Revenge!—

Nay, smile not, for, unarmed as I am,
My hate can strike thee prostrate.—Still thou smilest.
Well well, smile on! I'll change thy merriment.
Behold, the night watch comes; the sun is set—
Thy head is forfeited. Smile on, smile on.

Clau. Thou canst not be so base as to betray me.

Ador. Base! What I am thy villainy has made me.
The fool who scatters tares need not expect
A golden harvest. Base!—I but return
Treachery for treachery.

Clau. Heartless villain!

Ador. Ha! ha!—'Tis my turn now to laugh. Rail on,
Thy rage is impotent. Ho! guards! Rail on,

Thy anger feeds my spleen. Ha! ha!—O, 'tis a feast
To see the scoffer scoff'd. Rail on. You thought
The worm you trampled on could not recoil,
And lo! he stings to death. Ho! guards!—Behold

Enter Guards.—R. H.

A fugitive from justice. Seize upon him.—
'Tis Claudio! His life is forfeited
By the just sentence of the upright senate.
Seize him—seize him. Ha! ha! ha!

(CLAUDIO *defends himself, but is soon overpowered by the guards.* ADORNI
laughs wildly, in derision, and the curtain falls hastily.)

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

SCENE 1

Beraldo's house as before.—A table and chairs.

Enter BERALDO, gloomily.—L. H.

Ber. I have had a night of it; a night of the old fashion, and all's gone. The little white pated fellow's twenty ducats and all. The devil's blessing hang upon their winnings. All gone!—(*Sits down.*)—Now, what's to be done?

Enter ASTRABEL.—R. H.

Astra. Out all night! Where hast thou been, Beraldo?

Ber. Breathing, breathing, tasting the fresh air. Light food! but not such as a man will grow fat on. Give me some meat.

Astra. Yes, sir.

Ber. Why dost not move then?

Astra. I have meat, if I dare produce it.

Ber. Nay, bring it forth, wench, and mind not the quality, for I am sick with fasting.

(*Exit ASTRABEL.—R. H.*)

Why did the Duke procure my enlargement, if his aid is to stop there. Was it mercy to give me life and not the means of living? Better to have suffered me to starve in prison, surrounded by wretches as abject as myself, than to have me drawn forth to pine to death in the midst

of a joyous and brilliant world. There was no mercy in that.—(*Enter ASTRABEL with a dish of meat, which she places on the table.*)

Astra. The meat is ready, Beraldo.

Ber. (*Not hearing*) And her flinty-hearted father! to snap his very heart strings to punish her!

Astra. You do not hear me!

Ber. What sayest, chuck?

Astra. The meat is on the table.

Ber. Ah! this looks well!—But dog's meat would look well, I am so famished. O! by the lord, I could tear old Trebatzo's flesh. A plague choke him, and gnaw him to the bones!

Astra. Nay, sweetest, rave not thus!—Alas! it is no fault of mine.

Ber. Thine!—thou art a dove from the nest of the kite. In truth this is savory meat, and I have got a stomach with chafing. Sit down, Bell, and feed.

Astra. I have no appetite.

Ber. Sit down, sit down, I shall relish it the more if you partake of it. 'Tis well cooked! Where didst buy it? Well seasoned too! Sit down, sit down. I never tasted better. Where didst get it?

Astra. A neighbor sent it me.

Ber. Ah!

Astra. I was sick with hunger, without means to purchase food, and a neighbor sent it me.

Ber. Has it come to this! beg victuals! fed with broken meat! My wife standing at the rich man's gate, with a trencher to gather the offal from his table! O God, where will it end!

Astra. Eat, Beraldo.

Ber. Starve, starve first. I owe heaven but one death, and the sooner the debt be paid the better. I am weary of my trials.

Enter TREBATZO.—L. H.

Treb. A gentleman without desires to see my mistress.

Ber. His visit is ill-timed, but show him in. Whoe'er he may be, he cannot be worse welcome than despair, and that already has taken possession of our hovel.

Astra. Dost know him, Pacheco?

Treb. I think it is the Duke.

Ber. The Duke! quick, show him. (*Exit TREBATZO.—L. H.*) He is a noble friend, indeed, who, like the glorious sun, withholds not his rays even from the barren and neglected waste. The Duke! I revive.

Enter TREBATZO and DUKE.—L. H.

Your grace is welcome. Years have flown since my roof has been honored with your presence.

Duke. For the future, Beraldo, I shall not be as remiss as I have been.

Ber. As Duke of Florence, you gave me life and freedom, and though the gift proves to be of little value, I thank you for it with all my heart. As a man, you have sought me out in my wretchedness; for that act I cannot thank you. I am grateful, but no words can thank you.

Treb. A heart of the right stuff.

Duke. How is it, Beraldo, that so long a time has elapsed and we have not met?

Ber. O! sir, the prince and his subject may jostle each other and still be distant. When we last parted, my Lord, you travelled towards a throne, and I towards a prison. You were too lofty to stoop, and I too heavy laden to rise, therefore we met not.

Duke. But I might have relieved you of your burden had you appealed to me.

Ber. That I suppose your grace knew without being reminded.

Duke. You knew me for your friend, Beraldo.

Ber. I did at a time when I stood not in need of your friendship.

Duke. Nay, Beraldo, why so perverse? You cannot think so lightly of me as to suppose that a change of fortune must necessarily work a change in my nature.

Ber. Pardon me, your grace; my sorrows have somewhat soured my temper. I have been trampled under foot, ground in the very dust, but I feel that I am of as much worth still as when I went more richly clad; and that your grace is no better man in your purple than when you called me friend. These feelings forbad my crawling from my hovel to your palace, knowing that I would have left a palace in search of my friend in a hovel.

Treb. That's from a pure fountain.

Duke. I feel the justice of your censure; I have been to blame. Give me your hand; my future conduct shall cancel the remembrance of past neglect.

Ber. Your kindness overwhelms me. My heart has been so long unused to kindness, that the slightest ray melts it.

Duke. Your wife, Beraldo?

Ber. The same. The only flower that blossoms on this soil, and somewhat faded since you last beheld her.

Duke. But still beautiful. By your leave I must taste the fragrance of her lip. (*Salutes ASTRABEL.*) True to my word, mistress, you see I am with you soon again.

Ber. With her again!

Astra. Your grace is kind in giving me so early an opportunity to express my gratitude for your bounties.

Duke. Name them not. They are but the precursors to farther favors.

Ber. What does all this mean! He takes her hand. Pacheco—Thou seest, old man, we keep good company; we are in a fair way. His grace is gracious.

Treb. I see, I see. (*Observing the DUKE and ASTRABEL intently.*)

Duke. (*Looking around.*) This is a plain casket for so bright a jewel to lodge in.

Astra. As bright has lodged in a plainer.

Duke. And what is that?

Astra. Content.

Ber. Still playing with her hand. He cannot mean it. He bows and smiles. That look! Goats and apes, I understand you now.

Duke. Read this at your leisure. (*Slips a letter into her hand, which she places in her bosom.*)

Treb. Hell! she takes it.

Ber. What, art thou mad! (*Turning, sees ASTRABEL take her hand from her bosom.*) Ha! Why then, all's plain.

Duke. (*Apart to ASTRABEL.*) Thou shalt soon judge of my taste in jewels: this morning I selected a casket, which I beg you to accept for my sake. I take my leave; time will pass sluggishly until I see you again. Good Beraldo, we must see each other as in former times. I will visit thy low roof often.

Ber. O! you would do me too much honor! But have a care that the old house fall not about your grace's ears.

Duke. You are merry. I know, Beraldo, that a prison is a gulph that swallows wealth with appetite unbounded. I will be thy banker. Use my purse as thy own. Thou hast had a severe trial, but the storm is over. Look forward to better days. For this time farewell; we soon shall meet again.

Ber. Yes, we soon shall meet again. Open the door, sirrah—open wide as the gates of hell, that the prince of darkness may have free passage from my house.

(Exeunt DUKE and TREBATZO.—L. H.)

Astra. Beraldo, what means this passion?

Ber. Woman! But it is not for the thunder to strike the pliant reed. What, has it come to this! Does he think that I, who have spread as lofty sails as he hath, am such a slave to appetite that I may be brought to open the door, bonnet in hand, and welcome in infamy! He does not know me yet.

Astra. Hear me, Beraldo.

Ber. Not now, not now. I will not speak to thee, thou poor stricken one, while my soul is up in arms. Begone, begone. *(Exit ASTRABEL.)* I did think that I had long since tasted of every state of human degradation, little dreaming that I was reserved for this.

Enter LODOVICO.—L. H.

Another here! the court flies already buzz about me.

Lodo. How now, gloomy Beraldo?

Ber. Slight indications of a coming storm.

Lodo. Let it blow over and give place to sunshine.

Ber. The lightning shall scathe and the torrent shall pour first.

Lodo. Nay, be not thus moody because fortune frowns. Say that the world made thee her minion and danced thee on her wanton knee, thou wouldst still have thy portion of care, and neither sleep the better, nor live longer nor merrier. Hang sorrow.

Ber. Well, hang sorrow, an thou wilt.

Lodo. Thou mayest say so, for surely some left-handed priest christened thee, thou art so lucky. See here, a purse of gold.

Ber. A purse of gold. Well?

Lodo. A hundred ducats, which the duke sends thee.

Ber. O! he's a liberal prince! *(Takes the purse.)* Heaven grant I live to repay his liberality.

Enter TREBATZO, with a cloak on his arm.—L. H.

Treb. You are now in a fair way to fly high, signor, for fine feathers make fine birds.

Ber. What hast thou there, old man?

Treb. A cloak of the latest fashion, richly embroidered with silk and gold. 'Twould show bravely on the back of a courtier.

Ber. Would it on the back of an honest man?

Treb. Put it on trial, signor, the duke sent it thee.

Ber. A liberal prince, still say I. (*Takes the cloak.*) Thinkest thou, Pacheco, my shoulders are broad enough to bear the many favors he intends me.

Treb. Never question it.

Ber. Nay, old man, I must question it; ay, and face to face with him who alone can answer it. I begin to see myself. A hundred ducats and a tawdry suit is all that now is bid for what the universe could not have purchased—my honor. 'Tis well, 'tis well.

Treb. Put on the cloak, signor, the duke expects you at court.

Ber. The poisoned shirt of Nessus first. To the devil with the baubles. (*Throws the purse and cloak violently away.*) The duke expects me; well, he shall not be disappointed, though he shall encounter a different man than he expects to meet; and ere we part I shall teach him, that e'en the dull flint contains sufficient fire to burn the habitable globe to ashes. The flint has been struck and the spark elicited.

(*Exeunt.*—*L. H.*)

SCENE 2

A prison—Claudius discovered.

Clau. There's nought more certain than that all must die,
But when or how no wisdom can foretell.
Each spot is pregnant with a bane to life;
Each hour we're subject to the dreaded call,
And children tread the path before their parents,
Wringing from hearts, a world of woe had seared,
The only drop of moisture that delay'd
Their crumbling into dust. But I must fall,
While life is dimpled o'er with rosy smiles;
In perfect health of body and of mind,
Ere grief has taught me to expect the future
As the dull remnant of a tedious tale.

Enter JAILOR.—*R. H.*

Jailor. There is a priest without demands to see you.

Clau. Admit him.

(*Exit JAILOR.*)

For as to-morrow I may elsewhere shrive,
I'd have remission from this holy father.

Enter ADORNI, dressed as a friar.—*R. H.*

- Ador.* Lo! there he lies,
Where neither light nor comfort can come near him,
Nor air nor earth that's wholesome.
- Clau.* Father, I greet thee with a broken spirit,
Prepar'd to meet thy piety and wisdom
With due respect and reverence.
- Ador.* (*Apart.*) Can this be he!
What weak and superstitious fools are men!
If thoughts of death be distant from the mind,
The roaring thunder, and the forked fires
That rend the arch of heaven, we contemplate,
Without reflecting that 'tis nature's God
Speaks to the lowly creatures of his will:
But if th' appointed time of death draw nigh,
And the mind's filled with terrors undefin'd,
We yield obedient to a juggling monk;
Forget that he is frailty like ourselves,
And quaff the jargon flowing from his lips
As oracles divine.
- Clau.* You see me here
In health and vigor, yet about to leave
This joyful world, while all its flowers are blooming.
- Ador.* Turn the loose current of thy frolic mind,
From the gay scenes of thoughtlessness and guilt,
To errors unrepented; to some sin
Whose frightful hue o'ershadows all thy virtues,
And being unforgiven, leaves thee hopeless.
- Clau.* In the whole catalogue of all my faults
There is not one like this.
- Ador.* Report speaks otherwise.
- Clau.* True, father, but report has ever been
Too fond of foul mouth'd tales.
- Ador.* Deny it not.
To-morrow's sun may close upon this life,
And thou wilt hail the first beams of the next,
In what new region man cannot divine.
But perjury in this life, thy soul must feel,
Will not gain credit in the life to come.
Adorni's wife?
- Clau.* Is chaste, unspotted,

For any act of mine, or thought, or wish,
As the bright stars that stud the firmament
When not a cloud is seen.

Ador. Can this be true?

Clau. By all the terrors of a dying man,
As I speak truth, so speed my future journey.

Ador. I must believe thee. Scorpion like, I've turn'd
My sting upon myself, and needs must die.

Clau. What moves thee, father?

Ador. And is the wretch who brought thee to this state
Forgiven yet?

Clau. He was my friend, and being such, good father,
The sun ne'er rose and set while his offences
Were in this breast remembered.

Ador. You forgive him?

Clau. E'en as I hope myself to be forgiven.

Ador. Thou hast a heart whose lustre far outshines
The ocean's richest gems; whose ev'ry drop
Flows on as purely as the spotless milk
From the young mother's breast, her first born feeding.
But he who crush'd thee in his fit of rage,
And made his own hopes bankrupt, might defy
A sea of tears to wash his stains away.

Clau. Nay, say not so. The fault, sir, lies between
My wretched friend and me; and I forgive him.
His scorned wife prays for him—adores him still—
Then who remains to censure?

Ador. I—Behold! (*Throws off the disguise.*)
A wretch who has but too much cause to curse
The fool Adorni.

Clau. Ha! what masquerade is this!
Why are you here?

Ador. To be forgiven.

Clau. If that be all, thy errand's soon perform'd.
Thy fault's forgiven; and, ere the sun shall set,
'Twill be forgotten too, or never trust
The laws of this proud city. So farewell.

Ador. On my neck first shall fall the headsman's axe.

Clau. Thy neck, indeed! Fair words are lightly spoken!
Begone, Adorni; leave me to myself;
My time is short.

Ador. Thy life can yet be saved.

Clau. And thou wouldst save it; thou who hast betray'd?

Ador. I cannot blame thy doubts, since I begot them.
Still I will save thy life, for all this world
Contains is not as dear to me.

Clau. Indeed!

Ador. Clothed in this sacred garb, thou may'st elude
The jailor's vigilance.

Clau. Art thou sincere?
No new device in this?

Ador. O, Claudio!

Clau. And when I'm gone, say what becomes of thee?

Ador. Think not of me.

Clau. Give me thy hand, I feel thou'rt still my friend,
Dearer than ever.

Ador. You consent then?

Clau. Never!
He is a madman who would purchase life
By such an act, which of itself would make
His life not worth the purchase.—Know me better.

Ador. Hear me.

Clau. No more of that.

Ador. I hazard nought.
The duke will spare my life, but O! I fear
The law will be less merciful to thee.
Why hesitate?

Clau. Nay, nay; no more of that.

Ador. Is Viola forgotten?

Clau. O! Adorni.

Ador. Think, think of Viola. The duke's my kinsman,
And would not shed my blood for saving thine.
There, there the cloak.

(Puts the cloak on CLAUDIO.)

Ho, there! who waits without?
Speed thee, good Claudio, beyond the city,
There all is safe. Fear not for me. My life,

I feel, will outlast happiness.
There was a time when I did hope its close
Would be a foretaste of the life to come,
Made holy by thy presence and her love
Whose smiles made this world heaven. But that's past.
And I foresee my latest hour must close
In tempest and in gloom. Ho, there! who waits?

(JAILOR *appears*.)

Father, your blessing, and a last farewell.

Clau. Benedicite.

Exit with JAILOR.—R. H.

SCENE 3

A street before the Prison.

Enter EUGENIA.—L. H.

Eug. Where shall I fly for refuge? O, Adorni!
There's no way left! My name is foully stain'd!—
E'en in the grave the breath of scorn will reach me,
And rouse the mouldering ashes into life!

Enter CLAUDIO from the prison.—R. H.

Clau. I breathe again the bracing air of freedom,
Which now is all that envious fate has left me.
Still lean adversity, possess'd of that,
Is heaven compared to any state without it;
And though now stripp'd of fortune's gaudy trappings,
I still am free—the world's my heritage.

Eug. Ah! Claudio here! Where is Adorni? Speak!
Where is my cruel husband? I have been
In search of him e'en to our wretched home.
He was not there. How desolate it seem'd.

Clau. Thou'lt find him in that prison.

Eug. Why in prison?

Clau. He betrayed me,
And having forced me to the jaws of death,
Has ta'en my place to save me.

Eug. Didst thou consent
On terms like these to save thy wretched life?
O! shame to manhood, shame! Quick fly my sight,
Lest in my grief I turn betrayer too,

And do a deed will make me curse myself.
Good Heavens! in prison! Away! I'll seek him there,
And offer all the solace to his woes
A broken heart can yield. (*Exit into prison.*—*R. H.*

Clau. O! woman, source of every earthly bliss,
Without thee, Eden was a wilderness;
But with thee, even Afric's desert sands
Would bloom as Paradise before the fall.
(*Exit.*—*L. H.*

SCENE 4

Enter ORIANA.—*R. H.*

Ori. And can it be that four short years have so changed me, that he cannot look upon a fair face without wishing that mine were such, or indeed any other than what it is? Yet perhaps I wrong him—perhaps—

Enter LODOVICO.—*L. H.*

Well, Lodovico, why smilest thou?

Lodo. O! it's a fair day, madona, and I always smile when the sun shines. Though the idlest hanger-on at court, I am getting into service, lady.

Ori. How so?

Lodo. His grace, the duke, not an hour since, sent me with a purse of gold to poor Beraldo's hovel. He is becoming charitable, and I am proud to be his almoner.

Ori. Is it strange that those who have the power to distribute blessings, should have the will also?

Lodo. They do not always go hand in hand, lady. Well, before I had performed my first errand, a second was imposed upon me, and that too by Beraldo's beauteous wife. O! I am getting into service rapidly.

Ori. Why name her in my presence? Fie upon her.

Lodo. Scoff not at her; if all were branded for sins long since laid up, who could be saved? You know her not. As well might you look for the passage of the bird through the air, or for the track of the ship, as for the scar of those old offences.

Ori. Is she so changed?

Lodo. So much so that a vestal may now uphold her reputation against the slanders of the world. She desired me to deliver into your

own hands this letter and this casket of jewels, as she says they are addressed to you.

(Hands her a letter and casket.)

Ori. To me! this is strange; how came they in her possession? (*Reads.*) "To my soul's idol." Why, this is the duke's own writing!

Lodo. And therefore designed for you, lady; for, as she remarked, a faithful husband can have no other idol than a loving wife.—An apt conclusion, made from close observation of nature.

Ori. 'Tis well. I thank you for your service. You can go.

Lodo. So the duke is fairly trapped. This matrimony, I find, resembles somewhat the religion of the old Romans—every man must confine his devotions to his household lar, or his home will soon become too hot to hold him. (*Exit.*—*R. H.*)

Ori. (*Opens the letter.*) Why, what a strain of eloquence is here! Cupid himself was sure his secretary, and the very ink was dropped from Venus' eyes. To me he never wrote thus! Oaths, promises, and jewels, enough to tempt a vestal from her duty, and yet all proudly disdained by one that the world trampled on as if beneath its notice. What excellence must dwell in that bosom? Ha! here comes the duke! I will no longer conceal from him the knowledge I possess, but tax him home with his perfidy.

Enter DUKE.—*L. H.*

Duke. (*Aside.*) So, still some symptoms of a storm remaining! My gentle Oriana, I am charmed to see that the clouds that hung around thy brow this morning have dispersed, and that the light of thy sweet face breaks forth again.

Ori. Your grace is courteous. I find you are as gallant after a lapse of four years as upon our wedding day.

Duke. More so; and trust me, the wife's to blame if the husband's gallantry does not improve with time.

Ori. But often it increases to such a degree that it cannot be confined to a single object. In that case, who is to blame?

Duke. The wife, certainly. It is her business to keep her husband to herself; and if she neglect it, the fault lies with her. The point is clear as noonday.

Ori. That is man's sophistry; woman would reason differently.

Duke. Would she not rather permit her passions to decide, than go to the trouble of reasoning at all upon the subject? Even the gentlest are at times thus borne away. Confess now, Oriana, you did me wrong

in your suspicions of poor Beraldo's wife.

Ori. I confess that I did Astrabel injustice, and am sorry for it.

Duke. She was a petitioner for her husband's life, and you would not have me close my ears to mercy.

Ori. Certainly not, even though a beauteous woman were the advocate; and she is a peerless one.

Duke. I begin to think so, and am anxious to see her restored to her former station. Poor thing! I never beheld a creature more devoted to her husband.

Ori. You have found that out sir? But let us dismiss her, and turn to a subject more grateful. Your present has been received.

Duke. My present!

Ori. And I commend your taste. I knew not till now that you possessed such rare judgment in jewels. True, you chose a strange way of presenting them, but still they are valued as a testimony of your gallantry and love.

Duke. I am in the dark! What mean you Oriana?

Ori. This casket will explain.

(Produces the casket.)

Duke. Confusion!

Ori. You have seen it before my lord?

Duke. I think I have.

Ori. Rich as the jewels are, they are much more lightly prized than the impassioned letter that accompanied them.

Duke. The letter!

Ori. *(Produces the letter.)* Read for yourself. There is honeyed poison! You know the hand. O, fie, my lord, my lord!

Duke. Can it be possible! Whence had you this?

Ori. From a source you little think of—"Your soul's idol"; far worthier of your love than you imagined, for though surrounded by poverty, and having neither fame nor friends to lose, she has with scorn rejected your shameful overtures.

Duke. I beseech you let not passion carry you beyond reason.

Ori. My lord, my lord, attempt not to palliate; think of the baseness of the act. Beraldo was your friend—trampled on by a scoffing world. One word from you would have changed their scoffs to praises, and, yet, so far from feeling compassion, you attempt to rob him of the only good he has remaining, and make him poorer than the poorest. Shame! O shame! Better, my lord, were it to be without power, than thus to use it to oppress the fallen.

Duke. Hear me but speak. She's gone. So, the storm is fairly raised, and heaven only knows when it will pass over. (*A noise without.*) What means this disturbance in the palace?

Enter BERALDO.—L. H.

Ber. Off, ye sycophants and slaves. 'Tis not the first time my foot has trod upon this pavement; though ye have forgotten that, this time shall be remembered.

Duke. Beraldo here!

Ber. I could not longer rest patiently under the weight of the obligation that your grace would confer upon me, and have come to express my gratitude.

Duke. Name it not.

Ber. Pardon me, I must, and in such terms, too, that no mistake may follow. Are you acquainted with yourself, sir?

Duke. Thoroughly.

Ber. I am sorry for it, for I must say it is a disgrace to the Duke of Florence to be acquainted with such a scoundrel.

Duke. Scoundrel!

(*Half unsheaths his sword,—pauses, and sheathes it again.*)

Ber. That was the word but since it is not sufficient to rouse your courage hear more. There was a time when I stood by your side your equal in the world's eye in the proudest faculties that nature bestows on man. Our names were linked together on the public tongue and the one could not pass but the other followed. Our hearts it seemed were also joined, until your father thought fit to lay the axe at the very root of my growing fortunes, discard me from court, and disgrace the man whom he once delighted to honor. And why was this? Because I was not wholly devoid of the frailties of my nature. From that hour the faces of all were turned against me, save those who were too low to be sunk lower; and Florence became as a strange land. Years passed away, and my nature was changed by penury and shame. You knew my sufferings, and you also knew that a single word from your lips would have raised me to life and hope again, and yet you had not the humanity to breathe that word.

Duke. Beraldo.

Ber. I have not done yet. Your neglect stung for a moment and was forgotten. I placed you to the account of things created to be despised, and cared not again to look at the offensive page. Your grace was forgotten until this day you condescended to visit my humble

roof, when your well feigned friendship awakened feelings that for years have slumbered in my bosom. For a moment I felt towards you as I did in happier days, but soon I discovered that the seeming angel who came to solace the feeble and the wretched, was an arch devil, who, under an assumed shape, would have basely stolen the only remaining good the malice of the world had left me.

Duke. Will you not hear me?

Ber. I came not here to bandy idle words. I trust my cause, sir, to my advocate, (*touching his sword,*) well satisfied that his sharp argument will place the beggar and the prince upon a footing. Draw and defend thyself, if a life like thine be worth defending. (*Draws*

Duke. Beraldo, are you mad?

Ber. I cannot but remember there was a time when you would as soon have leaped into a den of hungry tigers, as to have offered me this day's insult. True, you presumed upon my outward change, but to thy cost thou'lt find me still the same within. Defend thyself, I say, while I teach thee how a knave in purple and gold may be put down by honesty in rusty velvet.

(*Presses on the Duke.*

Duke. Ho! there, without!

Enter LODOVICO and others, who seize and disarm BERALDO.

Ber. Are these your princely tricks? The ducal crown has made a noble fellow of you.

Duke. Away with him to prison.

Ber. A duke, a duke, but no man, no man, by heaven!

(*Exeunt.*—BERALDO led off.—*L. H.*

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

SCENE 1

The Prison.—ADORNI and EUGENIA discovered.—BERALDO lying at a distance on the floor.

Ador. And can you then forgive me? My glad heart
Leaps at the sound of thy sweet voice again,
Unmindful of its weight of guilty sorrow,
And I could gaze upon thee thus forever,

Till my wrapp'd soul had joyfully assum'd
Thy form and purity, most fit for heaven.
Speak, speak, belov'd, O! let me hear thy voice!
Say you again forgive me.

Eug. Joyfully!

Thus will I ever hang about thy neck,
In prison or in palace,

Ador. Hear her, ye saints,
And gain another virtue from her truth,
Beyond what poets, in their fondest dreams,
E'er sung of woman!

Ber. Go on, and ring the changes on that note!—There's nought
in life like bitter suffering for sweetening our natures. Grief mends the
heart, good sister.

Eug. If so, thine would have been perfect long ere this.

Ber. Nay, mine was broken past mending.

Ador. Beraldo —

Ber. What says the little mirror of honor?

Ador. We have never known each other.

Ber. Well, 'twas no fault of mine. I was familiar enough, heaven
knows, to encourage you. (*Rises.*

Ador. And had I not been blind with pride, I might have perceived,
that beneath the rough outside you assumed, there was a noble, gen-
erous, and feeling heart.

Ber. Feeling!—The shafts of the world have been shot at it until
it is one entire wound. Feeling!

Ador. And can you forgive me the shaft that I have thrown.

Ber. It hit the mark, signor, but I forgive you, and shall ever
think the better of myself that thy proud heart has deigned to ask it.

Ador. Your hand.

Ber. In tears, boy! No words could speak as eloquently as those
silent tears! Still you were right, Adorni. I know the worth of a
fair name, and I was once as proud of mine as any here in Florence,
until it was stolen from me, and banded about by the foul breath of
cut-throat rascals; and then, in self defence, I scoffed at those who suf-
fered their actions to be biased by a name. But no matter; my scof-
fing is over, and my name, such as it is, is quite good enough for a gibbet.

Eug. Despair not yet, Beraldo.

Ber. O, I shall fly high to the last. But poor Astrabel, who will
feel for thee when I am gone? Condemned in the sight of the world;

fallen in thine own esteem; cast off by those who should love thee;
who will comfort thee in thy forlorn and widowed state?

Eug. I—I, Beraldo, never will forsake, her.

Ber. You!—God bless you! The act will pave your path to heaven.

Enter DUKE.—R. H.

Ador. Ah! the Duke here!

Duke. What madness, Count Adorni, urged you on
To bear the weight of Claudio's punishment?

Ador. Compassion for the friend my madness injured.

Duke. And injured innocent what brings you here?

(To EUGENIA.)

Eug. He's still my husband, though your grace did part us.

Duke. It then would grieve you that the insulted law
Should separate you?

Ador. O, sir, but for that,

We have no earthly grief, no earthly fear.

Eug. Rather than leave him now, I'd undergo
The sharpest woes that e'er awaited mortal.

Duke. You shall redeem him at an easier rate.

(Walks to the back of the stage with her.)

Ador. What means this mystery?

Ber. Court tricks, I'll warrant you. Court tricks. I know him.

Ador. He ever loved her.

Ber. I have heard as much.

But for that matter Jove himself you'll find

A very Joseph, when compared to him.

Ador. She starts!

Ber. And well she may; the knave's a startler.

Duke. Consider it. The holy link that bound
Your fates together has been rashly severed.

He therefore has no reason to complain,

His life being purchased by a trifling toy

He reckless cast away and did not value.

Eug. Do not insult me, on my knees I pray you.

Ador. Wretch, stay not longer here, or I may do
An act of bloody justice, that shall teach
Reptiles in office, the bruis'd worm they tread on
May turn and sting.

Ber. Full gladly would I read him

A commentary on the same text gratis.

Duke. I came not here to prate with fools and madmen.

(*To* EUGENIA.)—Your fame is blighted, and remember, fair one,

You ne'er can gain the height from which you fell,
But the quick shaft of malice will o'ertake
And lay you prostrate. Virtue is folly now,
Since no one gives you credit for your virtue.

Ador. Patience, kind heaven, I'll do a murder yet.

Duke. Yield to my wishes, and my love shall place you
Where e'en the proudest matron in all Florence
Might crown the boldest flight of her ambition.

Ador. Hell gape and seize him!

Eug. Leave me, I beseech you.

Duke. Your name will be retrieved!—No slander then,
But all will speak your praise, smiles guide your footsteps,
And every eye adore your bright career,
E'en as the star that rules its destiny.

Ber. A precious rascal! He'd disgrace a gallows.
Patience, Adorni; hear his story out.

Duke. But, on the other hand, there's nought to live for
Save shame and beggary.

Eug. Well, be it so!

'Tis better far to starve in innocence,
Than lead a life of sumptuousness in guilt.

Ador. Base duke, we here are equal, man to man.
Tarry one instant longer, and we prove
Which is the better metal.

Ber. Bravely said.

Your grace will take the hint—my wrongs are fresh,
And though unarm'd, trust not too far to that:
I've still the weapons mother nature gave,
And feel disposed to use them.

Duke. Lady, farewell.

Reflect on what I've spoken; bear in mind
Adorni's life depends on your decision.

(*Exit.*—*R. H.*)

Ador. Which shall not weigh a feather in the balance.

Eug. My trial is severe.

Ador. True; but remember,

The Roman father saved his child from shame
 And let her pure blood flow. Remember too,
 The Roman matron dared not to outlive
 Her spotless virtue. Rouse and be a Roman.

Scene closes.

SCENE 2

An apartment in the Palace.

Enter ASTRABEL.—L. H.

Astra. Fail not, my stricken heart!—courage, courage! I have already once retrieved my poor Beraldo's life from the very jaws of death, and again the duke may lend a patient ear to my prayer to mercy.

Enter LODOVICO.—R. H.

Lodo. The lady Astrabel at court! most welcome.

Astra. Ah! signor, you were my husband's friend in happier days, forget it not in his adversity. Can you bring a wretch, so fallen as I am, into the presence of the duchess?

Lodo. I can, and gladly will attend you.

Astra. And yet I tremble to appear before her. I cannot but remember that we once were equals; and now!—O, memory, thou art indeed a heavy curse to the unfortunate.

Lodo. Despond not, lady. You have a fast friend, I assure you, in the duchess.

Astra. Did you deliver the casket to her, and that silly message?

Lodo. I did as you desired.

Astra. I cannot but reproach myself for having planted a pang in her gentle bosom; but indignation at the duke's conduct, and the hope that she might turn him from his evil course, and still retain his friendship for my husband, impelled me to take a hasty step which my cooler judgment condemns.

Lodo. Doubt not the event. Permit me to attend you to the duchess.

Astra. Thank you; my tears thank you. I have nothing left but tears. Heaven will reward you.

(Exeunt.—R. H.)

SCENE 3

The audience chamber of the Duke. *The Duke discovered on his throne, with his court around him. ADORNI and BERALDO are brought*

in, in chains, EUGENIA following them L. H.—CLAUDIO is seen in the crowd still in the disguise.

Duke. Bring forth the prisoners. Signor Adorni,
Since thou hast rashly ta'en upon thyself,
In stern contempt of justice and ourselves,
The punishment imposed on Claudio;
Although our kinsman, and a valued friend,
Do not presume upon our blood or friendship
To ask for mercy. The insulted laws
Must be appeased, although they rend in twain
The bleeding heartstrings of the upright judge.

Ador. I bend not here for mercy. I should spurn
Life, if thy gift. So thou mayest freely take
That, thou wouldst make a heavy curse by sparing.

Duke. Still obdurate.

Ador. I still retain the pride that nature gave me.

Eug. Do not provoke his rage, for my sake do not.

Ador. Let the pale coward shrink who fears to die,
And tremble if a sceptred knave but frown;
But he that's weary of this pageant life
Can laugh to scorn the impotence of man.

Duke. There's one way left.

Ador. Curst be the tongue that names it.

Ber. Fly high! A man of my own heart. Fly high!
By heaven I love thee, pride and all, Adorni.

Duke. What says the lady?

Eug. Hear me, in mercy hear.

Duke. Am I contemned then?—To the scaffold with him.

Eug. Alas! Adorni, do I bring thee death!

Ador. Grieve not for me; for I had rather meet
Death clothed in all variety of terror,
Than live to see a spot upon thy virtue.

Eug. Then we will die together.

Clau. Hold! *(Throws off disguise.*

Omnes. Count Claudio!

Clau. Here, take my forfeit life, and spare my friend.

Ador. How, Claudio! This sacrifice for me!

Clau. I owe it to myself and to the world.
'Tis better far to die in life's meridian,
And let the ethereal fire return as bright

As when 'twas given, than to rekindle it
With the base fuel of this abject world,
As millions do, and dim its brilliancy
Till quite extinguished, and no spark is found
Amid the worthless ashes that remain.

Duke. For thy sake, and thy father's, chaste Eugenia,
We've tented⁴ to the core thy matchless worth,
Which, like pure gold, unharm'd, has undergone
The fiery trial. In proof of our opinion,
We now restore thee to thy former rank,
And all the favor that was lately thine.
And since thou'rt parted from that wayward man,
And hast the power to make a happier choice,
Whoe'r you honor with your hand, we promise
Shall meet from us the marks of special favor.

Ador. That's to the heart.

Eug. With tears I thank your grace for your opinion,
And feel with all a woman's gratitude
The boundless debt I owe for what thou'st done,
To vindicate my fame so deeply wrong'd;
But do not think me wanting in respect,
If I prefer my husband's lowly fate
To all thy princely power can lavish on me.

Ador. I never knew her till this trying moment.

Duke. Signor Adorni, dare you question still
This wrong'd one's virtue and Count Claudio's truth?

Ador. I dare not raise my head: shame weighs me down.
My heart is smitten, and my pride is gone.
To think that my unworthiness had gain'd
The love of two such beings, and to think
That I dared question the decrees of heaven,
And murmur at my fate while I possess'd
Its choicest gifts, strikes to the very soul.
But my distemper'd mind at length is purged,
And all things now appear in their true colours.

Duke. And thou in thine. As the harsh sentence passed
On Claudio was teeming with injustice,
We here revoke it; and again restore
To him th' enjoyment of his former rights.

⁴ sounded.

Clau. Your grace has bound me to you forever.

Duke. Why stand you thus, Beraldo? Is the tongue
Now quite disarm'd that scarce an hour since spoke
Keen daggers every word?

Enter TREBATZO.—R. H.

Ber. I am bewilder'd.
A stream of light is rushing on my brain
Too dazzling for my vision. All is chaos!
That face!—In any other place than this
I'd swear it was Pacheco's.

Treb. And swear truly.
And yet it is thy father's face, Beraldo.

Ber. Where will this end! It was my daily prayer
My poverty and shame might be conceal'd
From Lord Trebatzo's eyes, until the grave
Had made me reckless of what foot trod on me;
Yet he has witness'd all my abjectness,
The strong convulsions of my tortured soul,
When it ran riot in its agony,
And deem'd no eye look'd on in cold derision:
I would that had been spared me!

Treb. So it has;
For while I witness'd all the sufferings
My cruelty had caused, I witness'd too
Thy worth and manly spirit, and still more,
Th' unshaken virtue of my much wrong'd child.

Ber. Speak not of that, old man, speak not of that!
You saw her take the letter from the duke.

Treb. And since have learnt she sent it to the duchess,
To lead th' apparent rover from his course.
'Twas I devised the trial, urged the duke
T' assume a part his noble nature spurns;
But he will ne'er regret, since th' event
Restores to a repentant father's heart
A spotless daughter and an injured son.

(Embraces BERALDO.)

Duke. Thy words shall yet be verified, Beraldo.
Thou shalt fly high, thou shalt be fledged again.

Ber. My thoughts are in such tumult—pardon me.
 The change has been so sudden, and my heart
 So ill prepar'd to meet a scene like this,
 My tears must speak for it. And yet these drops,
 So scalding hot—so painfully they spring,
 Though I would gladly name their fountain, joy,
 I may not yet.

Treb. (*Turns to* EUGENIA.) Thou'st had a fearful trial,
 But thou hast triumph'd, and art still my pride.

Eug. Better to fail in any other cause
 Than be the victor in a cause like this,
 Where the victor's vanquish'd.

Enter ORIANA.—*R. H. conducting* ASTRABEL, *who advances slowly.*
They are accompanied by VIOLA, *who is immediately joined by* CLAUDIO.

Ori. Right, Claudio, she is thine, and if she dare to deny it, call upon me for the proof.

Viola. I would not be so bold as to bring your grace's word in question; so, Claudio, there's my hand.

Clau. With rapture I receive it. (*They retire.*)

Treb. Look around thee, Bell, and perchance thou'lt find more friends present than thou expected to meet.—Old Pacheco.

Astra. Pacheco here! Ah! my father!—Dare I throw myself at your feet, embrace those knees, and ask forgiveness?

Treb. Not so, my child. In my arms—this bosom, in the very core of my old heart, is the place for such a daughter as thou hast been.

Astra. My father! And am I at last restored to a father's love.
 (*Rushes into* TREBATZO'S *arms.*)

Duke. No more of jealousy, my lovely Oriana.

Ori. Your grace has found a way to cure me; and yet you dressed up virtue in such a villainous garb, you cannot blame me for mistaking it.

Duke. Certainly not. However, the next time you detect me in that dress, pray deem my virtue masquerading still. I ask but that.

Ori. I'll grant it—if I can.

Treb. Beraldo, receive thy wife from her father's hand. I know her matchless worth, and with all my heart do I bestow her on thee. There, there, bless you, my children, bless you.

Ber. Thank heaven, Astrabel is restored! The penitent will no longer be trampled on! The diseased mind has been cured; the reprobate is again acknowledged; woman has had her trial, and in passing

the fiery ordeal, she has proved herself, in weal or woe, the brightest jewel that adorns the life of man.

(Curtain falls.

THE END

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